



## PREFACE.

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THE materials for this book were collected, and its first four chapters were also written over ten years ago. The book remained incomplete chiefly through want of leisure. At the request of some friends I completed it about three years ago, and it appeared by instalments in the "*Vedic Magazine*" of Gurukul Kangri, Haradwar. It is now being published in its present form. I wish I could rewrite the first four chapters; but want of leisure has rendered this impossible nor have I been able to do much in the way of revising them.

The book does not pretend to be an original work. Indeed there is hardly anything in it which I can call my own. It is full of quotations from the Zend Avesta, the Bible, the Koran and many other books of different religions. A justification for this will be found in the nature of the subject treated of and in the mode of enquiry adopted. In establishing a relationship between two religions by showing community of ideas between them one must adduce as many instances of similarity as one can. In fact the larger the number of similarities, the stronger and more convincing is the argument. The book also abounds with extracts from other authors. The reason is not far to seek. My own opinion on some of the points would have been too singular—rather presumptuous. Had it not been for this I should

not have inflicted so many extracts and quotations on the reader.

In comparing the different religions of the world I have freely availed myself of what information on the subject was within my reach. In tracing Mahomedanism to Judaism I have mainly followed Dr Sales to whom my acknowledgments are due on almost every page of Chapter I. In showing the influence of Buddhism on Christianity I have chiefly drawn on Mr. R. C. Dutt's *Civilisation in Ancient India*. But in tracing Judaism to Zoroastrianism and the latter to Vedism I have been less dependent on any particular authority.

In the last chapter while comparing Zoroastrianism and Vedism, I have taken the liberty to explain at some length the Vedic teaching on some of the points which have fallen under my notice. This is one reason why that chapter is comparatively so lengthy.

The object of this treatise, as the reader will see, is not to criticize any particular religion or religions, but to show the relationship existing among them all by disclosing their common origin from the Vedic teaching.

In the end, I only crave the reader's indulgence for any mistakes or omissions which might have crept into the book.

3rd February, 1909

G. P.

*Books consulted and referred to : —*

1. Rig Veda.
2. Yajur Veda.
3. Atharva Veda.
4. Shatapatha Brahman.
5. Taittiriya Upanishad.
6. Maudaka Upanishad.
7. Kaivalya Upanishad.
8. Kath Upanishad.
9. Nirukta.
10. Panini Ashtadhyai.
11. Amar Kosh.
12. Yog Sutras.
13. Niyaya Sutras.
14. Manu Smriti.
15. Bhagavad Gita.
16. Sattiyarth Prakash, by S. Dayananda Saraswati.
17. Rig Vedadi Bhashya Bhumi, by S. Dayananda Saraswati.
18. Terminology of the Vedas and European Scholars, by Pandit Gurn Datta, M. A.
19. Rev. L. H. Mills' Translation of the Zend Avesta.
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22. Chips from a German Workshop, by Max Müller.
23. Gifford Lectures, by Max Müller.
24. India : What can it teach us ? by Max Müller.
25. Lectures on the Science of Language, by Max Müller.
26. Indian Wisdom, by Monier Williams.
27. Teachings of Zoroaster and the Philosophy of the Parsi Religion, by Kapadia.
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30. Vedic Hinduism, by Mr. J. Murdoch.
31. Evolution of the Idea of God, by Grant Allen.
32. Theism, by Dr. Flint.
33. Treatise on the Reasonableness of Christianity, by Locke.
34. Isis Unveiled, by M. Blavatsky.
35. Secret Doctrine, by M. Blavatsky.
36. Historia Naturalis, by Pliny.
37. Civilization in Ancient India, by R. C. Dutt.
38. Essays on the Sacred Language, writings and Religion of the Parsis, by Martin Haug, Ph. D.
39. Comparative Philology, by E. W. West, Ph. D.
40. Angel Messiah of Buddhists, Essences and Christianity, by Bunsen.
41. Dalay-ul-Mashain, by M. Debi Pershad.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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### DIVINE ORIGIN OF RELIGION.

WHAT is the *Origin of Religion* - the origin not of this or that particular religion, but of religion in general, of which the various religious systems are only different manifestations? Broadly speaking there are two answers to this question, viz., (1) that religion is of *divine* origin, and (2) that it is of *human* origin. The former view does not ignore the obvious fact that finite minds, national history, and even the geographical features of a country, have played important parts in the growth and development of the existing religions. It only insists that the *ultimate* source of Religion is God.

This treatise does not profess to aim at an exhaustive treatment of this difficult and important problem. Its object is to show by a comparative study of the principal religions of the world that the newer religions can be traced to older ones, these latter to still older ones, and so on, till we reach the most ancient and primitive religion of humanity. A comparative study of religions will show that there has never been any real invention in the realm of religion, that the main principles which constitute its essence are as old as the human race, and that these considerations warrant the conclusion that the germs of religious knowledge were vouchsafed by God to man in the beginning of this creation. These germs are to be



found in the *Vedas* which are admittedly the oldest books in the library of mankind.

No theist will deny that God is in a sense the primary source of *all knowledge*. But this is true of *religious knowledge* in a special sense. Speaking of our idea of God Descartes, the father of modern Philosophy, observes to the following effect. The more I think, the more deeply am I convinced that this conception could not have been created by my own mind. God is infinite; my mind is finite. God is absolute; my mind is relative: and so on. It is, therefore, clear that I am not the originator of this idea. It must have been stamped upon my mind by God Himself. That there is much truth in these observations will be evident from the fact that our knowledge of God, His nature and attributes, is, in an important sense, unlike every other knowledge, unchanging and unprogressive. We know God to be just, good, and merciful, all-wise and all-powerful, infinite and absolute, and so on. But there was never a time when any of these attributes was unknown to man. The earliest *Rishis* prayed to and contemplated God as possessing these attributes. And what more can the modern philosopher or theologian boast of? Our knowledge of other things has been progressing by leaps and bounds; but our knowledge about the Deity has stood still. And it may be safely asserted that ages may roll away—science may go on progressing by greater strides than it has hitherto done—we may make more and more wonderful discoveries in the realm of matter—yet there will never come a time when man will be able to know any *new* truth about God. We may have a better apprehension and a more thorough realization of the divine

nature, but we shall never be able to discover a new attribute of God. Why? Because the knowledge of God has not been originated by the human mind.

What has been said here about our knowledge of God holds true of all *religious knowledge*. There never has been, there never shall be any real invention in the sphere of religion. H. P. Blavatsky truly observes :—

“More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder, whether Aryan, Semitic, or Turanian who had *invented* a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders are all *transmitters*, not original teachers.....Therefore is Confucius.....shown by Dr. Legge, who calls him ‘*emphatically a transmitter, not a maker,*’ as saying :—“I only hand on ; I cannot create new things. I believe in the ancients and therefore I love them.” (Quoted in *Science of Religion* by Max Muller.)”

Professor Max Müller also says :—“There has been no entirely new religion since the beginning of the world.”†

From these considerations we hold that the only satisfactory way of accounting for the origin of religious knowledge in this world is to refer it to the Deity. In other words, religion is ultimately of divine origin.

It may be asked : ‘Are then all the systems of religion equally divine? Are all the conflicting religions of the world equally true?’ Our answer is both in the affirmative and negative. As these religions exist at present, they contain a mixture of both truth which is *divine*, and of error which is *human*. But a

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\* *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, Introduction, pp. xxxvi—vii.

† *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, Preface, p. x.

careful comparison shows that in their essence they can all be traced ultimately to the Vedas. They differ from each other on many points; but there are also truths and principles which are common to all or most of them. These common truths and principles are ultimately derived from the Vedas.\* And even those points on which they seem so widely to differ, will sometimes be found to be the same at bottom, the apparent difference being due to a misconception or misconstruction of the long-forgotten truth of the Vedas on which they are ultimately founded.

We shall now proceed to show that the Vedas are the ultimate source of all religion—the fountain-head from which the stream of religious knowledge has flowed through the channels of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Mahommedanism. We can take into consideration only the five great religions named above. The other religions of the world are generally founded on one or more of them. Jainism,† for example, is only another form

\* Compare Swami Dayananda Saraswati's *Satyarth Prakasha*, p. 382—

जिस बात में ये सहस्र एकमत हैं वह वेदमतग्राह्य है और जिस में परस्पर विरोध हो वह कल्पित झूठा अधर्म अग्राह्य है ।

"Every point on which these thousand (existing religions) are unanimous is the religion of the Vedas and is to be accepted. That on which they contradict each other is artificial, false, contrary to religion, and is to be discarded."

† Jainism differs but slightly from Buddhism. The cardinal principles of the two religions are the same. But as to the relation between them there is much difference of opinion among scholars. According to some, Jainism is an offshoot from Buddhism; others think that it is co-eval with that religion, owing its existence to similar causes operating at the same historical period. Even if we accept this latter view, the precepts of Jainism can be traced to the Vedas in the same manner as those of Buddhism.

of Buddhism. The systems of Kabîr, Nának and Dádu are based chiefly upon Hinduism, and partly on Mahommedanism; Brahmoism is the child of Hinduism and Christianity; and so on, with other minor religions. We shall begin with Mahommedanism, the most recent of the five religions named above.

Note on the chronology of the five great religions—Mahommedanism, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism and of Vedism.

The reader need hardly be told that the religions named above are arranged chronologically. That Buddhism, for example, is older than Christianity, and Christianity older than Mahommedanism, is known to every body. It is equally certain that Vedism is older than Zoroastrianism, and Zoroastrianism older than Judaism. But the fact is not equally well-known, and it will not, therefore, be out of place to say a word or two about the relative antiquity of these three religions.

According to the Bible, Moses, the reputed author of *Pentateuch*, was born in 1571 B. C., and received divine mission in 1491. Thus the oldest books of the Jews do not claim a higher antiquity than 1491 B. C. And if we deny the Mosaic authorship of *Pentateuch*, we must accept the other theory that it was compiled by Ezra only 450 B. C.\*

The Zend Avesta, on the other hand, is much older. According to Dr. Spiegel, Zoroaster was a contemporary of Abraham, who lived in 1900 B. C., that is, more than 400 years before Moses. "Pliny a celebrated Roman Historian of the first century," says Dr. Haug, "goes much farther in stating that Zoroaster lived several thousand years before Moses.

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\* See Chapter IV, § 2.

(*Historia Naturalis*, xxx, 21)."<sup>\*</sup> Dr. Haug continues "Berosos, the Babylonian Historian, makes him a king of the Babylonians, and founder of the dynasty which reigned over Babylón between B. c. 2200 and B. c. 2000." While speaking of the sacred scriptures of the Parsis, Dr. Haug elsewhere observes: "The composition of the sacred literature of the Jews from the time of Moses (B. c. 1300 to 1500) down to the close of the Talmudic literature (A. d. 960), occupied a period of about 2,400 years. Were we to apply the same calculation to the Zoroastrian literature, its beginning would have to be placed as early as B. c. 2800, which would not in the least contradict the statements made by the Greeks about the age in which the founder of the Parsi religion was believed by them to have lived."<sup>†</sup>

The testimony of ancient Greek authors is to the same effect. "Aristotle and Eudoxus place his era as much as 6,000 years before Plato; others say about 5,000 years before the Trojan war (see Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*, xxx: 1—3)."<sup>‡</sup>

The Parsis themselves claim a very high antiquity for their scriptures. But even Christians must admit that they are older than the *Pentateuch*.

Few will deny that the Vedas are older than even the Zend Avesta—older than any other existing book. Our Rishis believe that they were revealed in the beginning of the creation. Whatever may be thought of this view, certain it is that there are no older books

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\* "*Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis*" by Martin Haug, Ph. D., late Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at the University of Munich, edited by E. W. West, Ph. D., 3rd Edition (*Trubner's Oriental Series*), p. 229.

† Haug's *Essays*, p. 136.

‡ Haug's *Essays*, p. 298.

in the library of mankind. Professor Max Müller admits:—

"There exists no literary relic that carries us back to a more primitive state in the history of man than the Veda."<sup>\*</sup> The Rev. L. H. Mills, the learned translator of the Zend Avesta, also assigns a much more ancient date to the Vedas than to the Zend Avesta. Says he: "As it is, the absence of Mithra and his colleagues who appear in the later Avesta permit us to place the Gathas (the oldest portion of the Zend Avesta)<sup>†</sup> considerably later than the oldest Riks."<sup>‡</sup> Again he observes: "We need time to account for this change—and no short interval of time. We can, therefore, place the Gathas long after the oldest Riks."<sup>§</sup>

In this review we shall show that the five religions, Mahomedanism, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Zoroastrianism can be ultimately traced to the Vedas, the one preceding being founded on that which follows it.

\* *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 4.

† The parenthesis is our own.

‡ Rev. L. H. Mills' *Translation of the Zend Avesta*, Part III, Introduction, p. xxxvi. (*Sacred Books of the East* Series, edited by Professor Max Müller.)

§ *Ibid*, p. xxxvii.



# THE FOUNTAIN-HEAD OF RELIGION.

## CHAPTER I.

### MAHOMMEDANISM IS MAINLY BASED UPON JUDAISM.

THE religion of Mahommed is based chiefly on Judaism, and partly on Zoroastrianism, on which Judaism itself is based. The first proposition is not denied by the Mahommedans themselves, who only claim that their prophet has improved upon the Jewish religion in certain respects. A detailed comparison of the two religions would, however, show how closely Mahommed has followed the Jewish religion even on points of detail, and would lead to the conclusion that there is little or nothing important in Mahommedanism for which the prophet could lay claim to originality or to Divine inspiration.

We shall in this branch of our enquiry follow Dr. Sale, whose preliminary discourse, appended to his celebrated translation of the Koran, contains a wealth of information on this subject.

#### § 1.—‘COSMOGONY’ OR THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE.

The idea that this universe is the first and the last of its kind is purely a Jewish idea, and forms a distinctive feature of Judaism, and the two great religions founded upon it, viz., Christianity and Mahommedanism. Again, the belief that this world was created out of nothing by a fiat of the Almighty is



also borrowed from Judaism. The story of Adam and Eve being created and placed in the garden of Eden, where they were allowed to partake of all things except the fruit of a particular tree; of their being tempted by Satan in the form of a serpent to eat of that very fruit; and of their subsequent fall from paradise, is borrowed almost literally from the Jewish scriptures.

The same may be said of the existence of a higher order of beings than man, *viz.*, the angels, who have pure and subtle bodies, created of fire, and who neither eat nor drink, nor propagate species. These angels are supposed to have various forms and offices, and the most eminent among them are Gabriel, Michael, Azrael and Israfil. "This whole doctrine concerning angels" says Dr. Sale, "Mahommed borrowed from the Jews, who learned the names and offices of those beings from the Persians, as they themselves confess, (*Talmud Hieros* and *Roshbashan*)."<sup>\*</sup>

The Koran teaches the existence of also an inferior class of beings called *jinn* or *genii* 'created also of fire, but of a grosser fabric than angels, since they eat, drink and propagate their species, and are subject to death.' "These notions," says Dr. Sale, "agree almost exactly with what the Jews write of a sort of demons called *Shedim*." †

## § 2.—THE DESTRUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE RESURRECTION.

The Mahommedans believe in the immortality of the soul and think that there will be a day of resurrection when the dead will rise to receive the

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<sup>\*</sup> Sale's Koran (*Chando's Classics*), Preliminary Discourse, p. 56, *vide* also Chap. IV, § 5.

† *Ibid*, p. 57.

rewards and punishments of their actions in life according to their merits and demerits. The whole of this doctrine has been taken from Judaism.

*The Resurrection.*—According to some writers the resurrection will be merely spiritual. The generally received opinion, however, is that both the body and the soul will be raised.\* It might be asked: how will the body which has been decomposed rise again? "But Mahommed has taken care to preserve one part of the body, whatever becomes of the rest, to serve for a basis of future edifice, or rather a leaven for the mass which is to be joined to it. For he taught that a man's body was entirely consumed by the earth, except only the bone called *Al Ajb* which we name the *os coccygis* or rump-bone; and that as it was the first formed in the human body, it will also remain uncorrupted till the last day, as a seed from whence the whole is to be renewed: and this, he said, would be effected by a forty days' rain which God would send, and which would cover the earth to the height of twelve cubits, and cause the bodies to sprout forth like plants. Herein also is Mahommed beholden to the Jews who say the same things of the bone *Luz* excepting that what Mahommed attributes to a great rain would be effected according to them by a dew impregnating the dust of the earth."†

*Signs of the Resurrection.*—The approach of the day of resurrection will be known from certain signs which are to precede it; for example:—

(a) The rising of the sun in the west.

(b) The appearance of the beast *Dajjal*, a monster of the most curious appearance,

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\* *Ibid*, p. 61.

† Sale's *Koran*, Prel. Dis., p. 61.

who would preach the truth of Islam in the Arabic language. The beast in the Revelation (Luke, xxiii : 8) seems according to Dr. Sale to be responsible for this idea.

(c) The coming of the Mehdi.

(d) The blast of the trumpet called *Sûr*, which will be sounded three times.

All these are more or less Jewish ideas. So is the teaching that after the resurrection but before judgment the resuscitated souls will have to wait for a long time under the burning heat of the sun which would descend to within a few yards of their heads.\*

*The Day of Judgment.*—After mankind have waited for a fixed time, God will, at length, appear to judge them, Mahommed taking the office of intercessor. Then every one will be examined concerning all his actions in this life. Some say that all the limbs and parts of the body will be made to confess the sins committed by each. Each person will be given a book in which all his actions are recorded. These books will be weighed in a balance to be held by Gabriel. Those whose good actions are heavier than the bad ones, will be sent to Heaven; and those whose evil actions preponderate, to the Hell. This belief has been taken in its entirety from the Jews. "The old Jewish writers," says Dr. Sale, "make mention as well of the books to be produced at the last day wherein men's actions are registered, as of the balance wherein they shall be weighed."†

The Jews in their turn borrowed this idea from the Zoroastrians. Dr. Sale hints that the Old Testament seems to have given the first notion of both

\* Sale's *Koran*, Prel. Dis., p. 68.

† See Midrash, Yalkut, Shemum, f. 153, c. 3, and Gemar Sanhedr, f. 91.

(Exod., xxxii, 32-33; Dan., vii, 10; Revel., xx, 12; Dan., v, 27.) "But," he admits, "what the Persian Magi believe of the 'balance' comes nearest to the Mahomedan opinion. They hold that on the day of judgment two angels named *Mehr* and *Sarush* will stand on the bridge we shall describe by and by, to examine every person as he passes; that the former who represents divine mercy will hold a balance in his hand to weigh the actions of men; that according to the report he shall make thereof to God sentence will be pronounced, and those whose good works are found more ponderous, if they turn the scale but by the weight of a hair, will be permitted to pass forward to paradise; but those whose good works shall be found light will be, by the other angel who represents God's justice, precipitated from the bridge into hell."<sup>2</sup>

On the road to heaven is the bridge called by Mahommed *Al Sirat*. This bridge is thrown over the abyss of hell, and is said to be finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword. Over this bridge the Muslims will easily pass led by Mahommed; whereas the wicked will soon miss their footing and fall down headlong into hell which is gaping beneath them. The Jews likewise speak of the bridge of hell which, according to them, is no broader than a thread. For this idea the Jews and the Mahomedans seem to be equally indebted to the Zoroastrians who teach that on the last day all men will be obliged to pass over a bridge called *Pul Chinanad*.†

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\* Sale's *Koran*, Prel. Dis., p. 71; also see *Zend Avesta*, Part III, West Mainyû Khard, p. 131.

† Sale's *Koran*, Prel. Dis., p. 78.

*Paradise.*—After passing the *Al Sirat* the faithful will reach paradise which is situated in the seventh heaven. The Mahommedan conception of paradise is that of a beautiful garden, furnished with springs, fountains, and rivers flowing with water, milk, honey and balsam, and trees having their trunks of gold, and producing the most delicious fruits. Above all, there will be seventy resplendent ravishing girls called *hur-ul-ayun* on account of their big black eyes. For almost the whole of this description Mahommed is indebted to the Jews. "The Jews constantly describe the future mansion of the just as a delicious garden, and make it also reach the seventh heaven (*vide* Gemar Tanith, f. 25; Biracoth, f. 34; Midrash Sabboth, f. 37). They also say it has three gates.....and four rivers flowing with milk, wine, balsam and honey. (Midrash, Yalkut Shewini)."<sup>\*</sup>

It is more than probable that the Jews themselves borrowed this idea from the Zoroastrians, who described the felicities of paradise in similar language. Dr. Sale observes: "The Persian Magi had also an idea of the future happy state of the good, very little different from that of Mahommed. Paradise they call *Bihisht*, and *Minu*, which signifies *crystal*, where they believe the righteous shall enjoy all manner of delights and, particularly, the company of *huran-i-Bihisht* or black-eyed nymphs of paradise, the care of whom, they say, is committed to the angel *Zamiyad*, and hence Mahommed seems to have taken the first hint of his paradisiacal ladies."<sup>†</sup>

We may also quote from *Nama Mihabad* one of the later writings of the Parsis: "The lowest order

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<sup>\*</sup> Sale's *Koran*, Prel. Dis., p. 78.

<sup>†</sup> *Ibid*, p. 79.

of heaven is this that its inmates will enjoy all the delights of this world: nymphs, male and female slaves, meat and drink, clothing and bedding, articles of furniture, and other things which cannot be enumerated here." (Mihabad 40 and 41).<sup>\*</sup>

*Hell*.—Similarly the different torments of hell, the seven compartments into which it is said to be divided, and the partition called *Al Airaf*, separating heaven from hell, all seem to be copied from the Jews.

### § 3.—GOD AND THE DEVIL.

The Mahommedan conception of God agrees almost exactly with the Jewish notion. And the doctrine that there are two powers in the world, a good and benevolent power, viz., God; and an evil and malevolent power, viz., Satan, is also taken from the Jews. This notion, which seriously mars the Monotheism of the Bible and the Koran, was certainly borrowed by the Jews from the Zoroastrians, who call these two principles *Spenta Mainyu* and *Angira Mainyu*. In a later chapter† we shall discuss this question more fully, and show how this Zoroastrian idea can be traced to a beautiful allegory in the Veda, describing the struggle of good and evil in this world; and how this allegory was misunderstood till in the hands of the Jews, Christians, and Mahommedans, it degenerated into a belief in two powers, Satan having been elevated to a position a little below that of the Deity. This is a very important point, and will show, in a remarkable manner, how the stream of religious thought has flowed from the Vedas to the Zend Avesta, and thence to the Bible and the Koran.

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\* See also Chapters IV and V, *infra*.

† Vide Chapter IV, § 4.

## § 4.—RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

We have shown so far that the principal *dogmas* of the Mahommedan religion have a Judaic origin. We shall next show that their *religious practices* can be traced to the same source.

There are four duties incumbent upon every Mahommedan, *viz.*, (i) Prayer; (ii) Fasting; (iii) *Zakat* or charity; and (iv) Pilgrimage to Mecca.

(i) *Prayer*.—The following extract from the *Dasatir* would show to the reader that the several postures of the followers of the prophet at prayers have been probably copied from the Zoroastrians :—

"During prayer a pious and wise man should stand ahead, and the rest should stand behind him. A man (during prayer) should stand erect and join his hands together, then bow down, then prostrate himself on the ground, then again stand erect, place one of his hands on the head, and removing it place the other hand on the head, then raise his head and clasp his hands without joining the thumbs, place his thumbs on his eyes, making the fingers reach the head, then bend his head down to his breast, then raise it, then sit on the ground, then putting his hand on the ground and kneeling down touch the ground with his forehead, and then with each side of the face; then prostrate himself on the ground like a staff, then stretch his hand till the breast touches the ground, then do the same with the thighs, then kneel down, then squat, and place his head on his folded hands. Such prayer is to be addressed to none but God."

The practice among Mahommedans of saying their prayer with their faces towards the *Kabah* is likewise

borrowed from the Jews who constantly pray with their faces turned towards the temple of Jerusalem. "The same," observes Dr. Sale, "was the *Kibla* of Mahommed and his followers for 6 or 7 months (some say 18 months, *vide* Abulfed, Nit. Moh., p.54), till he found himself obliged to change it for the *Kabah*."\*

The practice of performing before prayers ablutions with water or sand is also borrowed from the Jews and the Persians. The circumcision is well-known to be a Jewish custom.

(ii) *Fasting*.—Speaking of Mahommed's ordinances concerning *fasting*, Dr. Sale traces them to those of the Jews, and observes: "That nation, when they fast, abstain not only from eating and drinking, but from women and from anointing themselves, from daybreak until sunset,.....spending the night in taking what refreshments they please (*Gemar Yama*, f. 40, etc.)"†

(iii) *Charity*.—This is of two kinds, *viz.*, (1) *Zakât* and (2) *Sadkâ*; and specific rules are laid down for the giving of these alms. In these rules also Dr. Sale observes the footsteps of the Jews, (*vide* Prel. Dis., p. 87).

(iv) *The Haj or Pilgrimage to Mecca*.—The pilgrimage to Mecca was not borrowed from the Jews, but was a relic of the pagan Arabs. The temple of Mecca had long been held in singular veneration by the Arabs, and the prophet considered it inexpedient to disturb the belief.

#### § 5.—NEGATIVE PRECEPTS.

Among the negative precepts common to the Jews and the Mahommedans may be mentioned abstaining

\* Sale, Prel. Dis., p. 85.

† Sale's Prel. Dis., p. ?



from gaming;\* wine;† usury;‡ and certain kinds of prohibited meats.

Regarding prohibited meats we read in the Koran, as follows:—"Ye are forbidden to eat that which dieth of itself, and blood, and swine's flesh, and that on which the name of any besides God has been invocated, and that which hath been strangled or killed by a blow, or by a fall, or by the horns of another beast, and that which has been eaten by a wild beast, except what ye shall kill yourselves, and that which has been sacrificed to idols."§ "In these particulars," says Dr. Sale, "Mahommed seems chiefly to have imitated the Jews, by whose law, as is well known, all those things are forbidden, but he allowed some things to be eaten which Moses did not.||

#### § 6.—CIVIL INSTITUTIONS.

The civil institutions of the Mahommedans are founded upon the Koran, as those of the Jews are founded on the Pentateuch. That the former were copied from the latter would be evident from the following:—

- (i) *Polygamy* is allowed by both, but no Musalman may marry more than four wives at a time. "In making the above-mentioned limitation," observes Dr. Sale, "Mahommed was directed by the decision of the Jewish doctors who, by way of counsel limit the number of wives to four (*vide* Maimon in Halachoth Ishath, c. 14), though

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\* Bana Mesia 84, 1; Roch. Aashena 24, 2.

† Levit x, 8—9; Numbers vi., 2—3.

‡ Exodus xxii, 25.

§ Sale's Koran, Chapter V, p. 73.

|| Levit, xi, 4.

their law confines them not to any certain number."

- (ii) *Divorce* is an institution common to both religions. In allowing divorce Mahommed has followed the Jews. When a woman is divorced, she must wait for three months before she can re-marry. This period is called *iddat*. At the end of this period, if she is found with child, she must be delivered of it before she can marry again. "These rules," says Dr. Sale, "are also copied from the Jews, according to whom a divorced woman or widow cannot marry another man, till ninety days be past after the divorce or death of the husband." Dr. Sale adds: "The institutions of Mahommed relating to the pollution of women during their courses, the taking of slaves to wife, and the prohibiting of marriage within certain degrees, have likewise no small affinity with the institution of Moses."†

#### § 7.—SOME MINOR SIMILARITIES.

- (i) The setting apart of one day in the week for the special service of God is also an institution of the Jews who keep Saturday sacred. The Christians have Sunday for their Sabbath day. Mahommed has imitated these religions in this respect; but for the sake of distinction he has ordered his followers to observe Friday, instead of Saturday or Sunday.

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\* Sale's Prel. Dis., p. 104.

† Sale's Prel. Dis., 105-06.

- (ii) The celebrated formula of the Koran "La-Elah-illallah" (there is no God but God) is a mere paraphrase of the Zoroastrian formula, "Nestezad magar yazdan"
- (iii) It should be further noted that every chapter of the Koran (excepting only the ninth) opens with the words "*Bismillah ur Rahman e Rahim*," which exactly correspond to the formula with which the Zoroastrians begin their books, viz., "Banam Yazda bakh shish gar dádár" (in the name of the most merciful God.)

#### § 8.—SUMMARY.

The above is sufficient to show that Mahomedanism has borrowed almost all its doctrines and precepts mainly from Judaism, and partly from Zoroastrianism. The religion of the Koran cannot, therefore, claim to be a new revelation, or a *special* dispensation of the Will of God. Our Mahomedan brethren will, perhaps, urge that the monotheism of the Koran is purer and better than that of Judaism and Christianity, to speak nothing of Zoroastrianism which is not monotheism at all, being a belief in two gods. Now there can be no doubt that the Christian conception of God is, in several ways, superior to the Mahomedan conception. God is represented by the Christians as a more righteous, more merciful, more holy and more loving being than the God of the Koran. In another way, the theism of Christianity is certainly inferior to that of the Koran. Christianity teaches the doctrine of Trinity which is virtually a belief in three gods, and in this respect the Koran teaches a stricter monotheism than Christianity. But it is

difficult to understand how Mahommedanism can claim to teach a better theism than Judaism; because both are equally monotheistic or equally dualistic. Both raise Satan to a position all but equal to that of God, and thus equally mar the purity of their monotheism. Both have the same conception of the Divine character; and the anthropomorphic, vascillating, and revengeful Jehovah of the Jews finds an exact counterpart in the *Allah* of the Koran, who is described as an intolerant and despotic potentate, urging his worshippers to make war upon and slay the infidels.

As for Zoroastrianism, its theism is in no way inferior to that of either Judaism or Mahommedanism. "Ahurmazda," says the Rev. L. H. Mills, "is one of the purest conceptions which had yet been produced"<sup>\*</sup>—and we may add,—is undoubtedly the prototype of the God of the Koran as well as the God of the Bible. We shall revert to this subject in detail later on.<sup>†</sup> The great value of Mahommed's doctrine of the unity of God lies in its being a protest against the degenerate Christianity of his time, and the polytheism of the Arabs among whom he lived. But however superior to the belief of his contemporaries, the theism of the Koran can hardly be said to be superior to that of Judaism. The claim of the Koran, therefore, to be a special revelation of God, on the plea of teaching a better theism than Judaism and Zoroastrianism, to which it can be traced, is quite untenable.

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\* Zend Avesta, Part III, Introduction, p. xviii.

† Vide Chapter IV., § 3-4; and Chapter V., § 5.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHRISTIANITY IS BASED CHIEFLY ON JUDAISM AND PARTLY ON BUDDHISM.

[ "What is now called the Christian religion has existed among ancients and was not absent from the beginning of the human race, until Christ came in the flesh. from which time the true religion, which existed already, began to be called Christianity."—*August. Relu.*, I, 13.]

#### § 1.—JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

THE dogmas of the Christian religion, as its followers themselves confess, are all taken from Judaism. The Old Testament is accepted as the Word of God by Christians, as much as by the Jews. Christ, a Jew by birth, never professed to abolish Judaism, and to set up a new religion of his own. In his beautiful Sermon on the Mount, he explains very clearly his attitude towards the older religion:—"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For, verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever breaks one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."\* Here it may be asked: Is there, then, no difference between Judaism and Christianity? Are the teachings of the two religions exactly the

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\* Matthew V: 17—19.

same? Is there nothing to distinguish one from the other? We answer that the dogmas or metaphysical doctrines of Christianity are certainly the same as those of Judaism, but its moral precepts are much higher and nobler than those of the Jewish prophets. This difference between the two systems is very vividly brought out by Christ himself in his "Sermon on the Mount," from which we have already quoted:—

"For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire. Therefore, if thou bring the gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say

unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by the head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, *Yea, yea*; *Nay, nay*: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him

twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away."

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

From the above it is clear that Christianity as a system of morals is a great advance on Judaism. Humility of spirit, purity of conduct, forgiveness of injury, relinquishment of worldly desires, peace, charity, goodness, toleration and love—in short, a higher ideal of human life and a nobler code of morality, are what distinguish the religion of Christ from the older religion of Moses.

But these are by no means original with Christianity, being due to the influence of Buddhism.

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### *Buddhist Element in Christianity.*

#### § 2.—CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION.

"The moral precepts and teachings of Buddhism," says Mr. R. C. Dutt, "have so much in common

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\* Matthew, V: 20—48.



with those of Christianity, that some connection between the two systems of religion has long been suspected"\*. The teaching of Buddha had penetrated into the Greek world long before the birth of Christ. We know from Asoka's inscription of Girnar that in his reign Buddhist preachers had gone to Syria to preach their religion. Pliny, the Naturalist (a celebrated Roman Historian of the 1st Century A. C.) describes a religious sect called the *Essenes*† living in Palestine about a century before Christ, who, as modern researches have clearly shown, were a sect of Buddhists. In Egypt also there was a similar sect called the Therapeuts. That these were a branch of the Essenes, or, in other words, Buddhists, is admitted even by such devout Christians as Renan, the celebrated author of *Life of Jesus*. Says he: "The Therapeutæ of Philo are a branch of the Essenes. Their name appears to be but a Greek translation of that of the Essenes."‡ Thus we learn that when Christ was born, Buddhism prevailed in Palestine, Syria and Egypt, and Buddhist precepts were received as household words among the Essenes of Palestine. "Some moderate Christians," says Mr. R. C. Dutt, "admit that Buddhism in Syria was a preparation, a fore-runner (to quote the words used by Professor Mahaffy), of the religion preached by Christ over two centuries later."§ We know that John the Baptist, "the fore-runner of Christ,"

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\* *Civilization in Ancient India* by Mr. R. C. Dutt, C.S., C.L.E., Vol. II, p. 328.

† *Vide Historia Naturalis*, V : 17, quoted by Mr. R. C. Dutt in *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 338.

‡ Quoted in Dutt's *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 337.

§ *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 320.

was well familiar with the doctrines of the Essenes. Some writers maintain that he was an Essene himself.\* It is, therefore, clear that Jesus Christ himself learnt much of the rites and teachings of the Buddhists from the Baptist. These facts are enough to show a channel of communication between Buddhism and Christianity.

### § 3.—SIMILARITY IN PRECEPTS.

Having indicated the possibility of communication, we now put, side by side, some precepts of Buddha and of Christ, to show how closely they resemble each other in language and in sentiment:—

#### Buddha.

1.—“What is the use of plated hair? O fool! what of the raiment of goat-skins? within thee there is ravening, but the outside thou makest clean.”  
—*Dhammapad*, 394.

#### Christ.

1.—“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead man’s bones and of all uncleanness.”—*Matthew*, xxiii: 27.  
“And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees, make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.”—*Luke*, xi: 39.

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\* See Bunsen’s *Angel Messiah of Buddhists, Essenes and Christians*, p. 40. Referred to in *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 338.

**Buddha.**

2.—“Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time, hatred ceases by love: this is its nature. Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us. Among men who hate us, let us live far from hatred. Let him overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good.”—*Dhammapad* v: 197 and 223.

3.—“Destroying living beings, killing, cutting, binding, stealing,<sup>1</sup> speaking falsehood, fraud, deception, worthless reading, intercourse with another's wife—this is *Anigundha* (what defiles a man).”—*Anigandha Sutta of Sutta Nipat* (Sacred Books of the East Series, p. 40.)

4.—“Like a beautiful flower, full of colour but without scent, are the fine and fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.”—*Dhammapada*, 51.

**Christ.**

2.—“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”—*Matthew*, v: 44.

3.—“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.”—*Matthew*, xv: 19-20.

4.—“All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”—*Matthew*, xxiii, 3.

**Buddha.****Christ.**

5.—“All men tremble at punishment, all men love life. Remember that you are 'like unto them and do not kill or cause slaughter.”—*Dhammapada*, 130.<sup>o</sup>

6.—“The fault of others is easily perceived, but of ourself is difficult to perceive. A man winnows his neighbour's fault like chaff, but his own fault he hides as a cheat hides the bad die from the gambler.”—*Dhammapada*.†

5.—“And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”—*Luke*, vi : 31.

6.—“And why behold-est thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.”—*Matthew*, vii : 3.

Thus we see that inward purity, meekness, forgiveness, returning good for evil—these are the distinctive features of Buddhism as well as of Christianity.

\* Compare—

श्रूयतां धर्मसर्वस्वं श्रुत्वा चैवावधार्यताम् ।

आत्मनः प्रतिकूलानि परेषान्न समाचरेत् ॥

(महाभारते)

“Listen to the sum total of the law; and having listened conform to it. Do not do to others what you do not like for your self.”—*Mahabharat*.

† Compare—

खलः सर्पपमात्राणि परछिद्राणि पश्यति ।

आत्मनो विल्वमात्राणि पश्यन्नपि न पश्यति ॥

(चाणक्यनीति)

“A wicked man sees another's faults even if they are so small as a mustard. But he is wilfully blind to his own (faults), though they are as big as a bel fruit.”—*Chanakyaniti*.

The parables of the New Testament also bear a marked resemblance to those of Buddha, and are most probably copied from them. "Renan," says Mr. Dutt, "who is so unwilling to admit Buddhist influence on the development of Christianity, nevertheless states that there was nothing in Judaism which could have furnished Jesus with a model for the parable style. On the other hand, 'we find in the Buddhist books parables of exactly the same tone and the same character as the Gospel parables.'—*Life of Jesus* (Translation), p. 36."\* The space at our disposal will not permit us to quote these parables at length, for the sake of comparing them. We may, by way of illustration, refer the reader to the parable of the sower in *Bharadvaja Sutta*, which may be compared with John. V : 14 ; and to the parable of Dhaniya in *Dhaniya Sutta*, which closely resembles Luke, xii : 16.

#### § 4.—SIMILARITY IN MONASTIC FORMS AND CEREMONIES.

Dr. Fergusson who is perhaps the highest authority on the subject of Indian Architecture, makes the following remarks about the Buddhist cave temple of Karli, the date of which he fixes at 78 B. C.:—"The building resembles, to a great extent, an early Christian church in its arrangement, consisting of a nave and side aisles, terminating in an apse or semidome, round which the aisle is carried...As a scale for comparison, it may be mentioned that its arrangements and dimensions are very similar to those of the choir of Norwich Cathedral, and of the *Abbaye aux Hommes* at Caen, omitting the outer aisles in the

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\* *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 393.

latter building. Immediately under the semidome of the apse and nearly where the altar stands in Christian churches, is placed the Dagopa.\*

"But the architectural similarity," says Mr. Dutt, "sinks into insignificance in comparison with the resemblance in rituals between the Buddhist and the Roman Catholic Church. A Roman Catholic missionary, Abbe Huc, was much struck by what he saw in Tibet. "The crozier, the mitre, the dalmatic, the cope or pluvial, which the Grand Lamas wear on a journey or when they part, or in some ceremony outside the temple, the service with a double choir, psalmody, exorcisms, the censer swinging on five chains contrived to be opened or shut at will, benedictions by the Lamas with the right-hand extended over the heads of the faithful, the chaplet, sacerdotal celibacy, lenten retirements from the world, worship of saints, fasts, processions, litanies, holy water;—these are the points of contact between the Buddhists and ourselves." Mr. Arthur Lillie, from whose book Mr. Dutt has quoted the above passage, remarks: "The good Abbe has, by no means, exhausted the list and might have added confessions, tonsure, relic worship, the use of flowers, lights and images before shrines and altars, the signs of the cross, the trinity in Unity, the worship of the queen of heaven, the use of religious books in a tongue unknown to the bulk of the worshippers, the aureole or nimbus, the crown of saints and Buddhas, wings to angels, penance, flagellations, the flabellum or fan, popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots, presbyters, deacons, the various architectural details of the Christian temple. To this list Balfour's *Cyclopædia of India* adds

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\* Quoted in *Ancient India*. Vol. II., n. 334.

amulets, medecines, illuminated missals, and Mr. Thomson (*Illustrator of China* Vol. II, p. 18), baptism, the mass, requiems" (*Buddhim and Christendom*, p. 202).~

Baptism which is already included in the above list is common to Buddhism and to Christianity. Indeed, it was originally a Buddhist ceremony, called **अभिषेक** *Abhisheka*, and was probably borrowed by John the Baptist from the Essenes, or Buddhists of Palestine. When Christ came in contact with John the Baptist, he adopted this rite, which has since become a fundamental rite of the Christian religion. A Christian acknowledges the Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost at baptism. Similarly, a Buddhist acknowledges the 'Trinity of *Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha* at *Abhisheka*.

"So strong is the resemblance," says Mr. R. C. Dutt, "that the first Christian missionaries, who travelled in Tibet and China, believed and recorded their impression that the Buddhist Church had borrowed their rites and forms from the Roman Catholic Church. We will show, however, in our next book that the Buddhists excavated many of their great church edifices in India before Jesus Christ was born; that a vast monastery, a wealthy church and a learned university flourished in Nalanda, near Patna, before similar church edifices and monasteries were seen in Europe; and that as Buddhism declined in India, gorgeous Buddhist rites, ceremonials, and institutions were copied from Nalanda and other places by Buddhists in Tibet, China, and other countries, before Europe had yet recovered from the invasions of barbarous races, or had developed her feudal

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\* Quoted from *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 935.

civilization or feudal church system." The learned writer goes on, and concludes by, saying that "the entire structure of the church government and church institutions, in so far as there is a resemblance between the two systems, was borrowed from the East by the West, not from the West by the East."<sup>2</sup>

### § 5.—SIMILARITY IN THE ACCOUNTS OF THE LIVES OF BUDDHA AND CHRIST.

It is not a little strange that the remarkable resemblance which we have noticed between Buddhism and Christianity extends even to the lives of their founders. Gautama Buddha, as well as Jesus Christ, is said to have been miraculously born of a virgin mother. The birth of each was attended with marvellous omens, and was presided over by a star which, in the case of Gautama, was the well-known *Pushya Nakshatra*.

In Gautama's Life, we are told that when he was born a certain *Rishi*, Asita by name, came to king Suddhodana to see the new born divine.

Similarly, in the New Testament, we read :—  
"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judca, in the days of Herod the King, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying 'where is he that is born king of the Jews ? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.'"<sup>†</sup>

The legends of the evil spirit *Mara* having tempted Gautama before he attained to Buddhahood, bear a marked resemblance to the legends of Satan having tempted Jesus Christ.<sup>‡</sup> Both Gautama and Jesus

\* *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 335-6.

† Matthew, II : 1-2.

‡ See Matthew, IV : 1-11



are said to have had twelve disciples each. The same catholic and benevolent spirit impelled both to proclaim the truths of their system, to all mankind without any distinction of creed or caste. These remarkable similarities would show that Christian legends and traditions, as well as Christian precepts and rites, are, to a great extent, derived from Buddhism.

### § 6.—SUMMARY.

We have shown that Buddhism prevailed in Palestine when Christ was born; that Christ himself came in contact with it through John the Baptist. We have shown that there is a striking resemblance between Buddhism and Christianity in their precepts, in their forms and ceremonies, in the architectural style of their temples, and even in the lives of their founders. Is this all mere chance? "If all this be chance," says Mr. Rhys Davids, "it is a most stupendous miracle of coincidence, it is in fact ten thousand miracles."—*Hibbert Lectures*, 1881, p. 193. Indeed, on the facts before us, it is impossible not to conclude that Christianity owes much to Buddhism. Even Christian writers like Prof. Max Müller, have found themselves forced to confess this. As proof upon proof is brought forward to show the priority in other religions of the truths of Christianity, the Professor exclaims:—"And why should every truth be borrowed from Christianity? Why should not Christianity also have borrowed." There occurs another admission in his *Chips from a German Workshop*, a sentence from which we have already quoted: "There has been no entirely new

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\* *Gifford Lectures*, pp. 10-11.

religion since the beginning of the world. If we once understand this clearly, the words of St. Augustine, which have seemed startling to many of his admirers, become perfectly clear and intelligible, when he says 'what is now called the Christian religion has existed among ancients and was not absent from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh, from which time the true religion, which existed already, began to be called Christian.'"—*August Rel.*, I : 13. From this point of view the words of Christ too, which startled the Jews, assume their true meaning, when he said to the centurion of Copernaum : "Many shall come from the East and the West and shall sit down with Abraham and Israel and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."\*

This a pretty clear admission and shows how the West is being gradually awakenend to a sense of its obligation to the East. "A few writers like Bunsen, Seydill and Lillie," says Mr. R. C. Dutt, "maintain that the Christian religion has sprung directly from Buddhism."† This, as the learned writer justly observes, is an extreme opinion. The doctrines of Christianity have little to do with Buddhism having been borrowed from Judaism. But there is no denying the fact that Christianity owes to Buddhism that higher morality which distinguishes it from Judaism, or to use Mr. Dutt's words, "Christianity as an ethical and moral advance on the religions of antiquity is based undoubtedly on Buddhism, as preached in Palestine by the Essenes, when Jesus was born."‡

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\* *Chips from a German Workshop*, by Prof. Max Müller, Vol. I, Introd., p. 11.

† *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 329.

‡ *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 340.

### CHAPTER III.

## BUDDHISM IS BASED ON THE VEDIC RELIGION.

### § 1.—BUDDHA'S TEACHING ORIGINALLY NOT MEANT TO BE A NEW RELIGION.

In the last chapter we have traced the sources of Christianity. We have shown that its doctrines are based on Judaism and its moral precepts on Buddhism. The Vedic source of Judaism, through Zoroastrianism, will form the subject of the last two chapters. In the present chapter we shall prove that Buddhism, or that noble code of morality, which was preached by Buddha, and which influenced the development of Christianity, sprang up directly from the Vedic religion. The proposition will, perhaps, startle some followers of the Vedic religion, who regard Buddhism as antagonistic to the Vedas. Yet certain it is that Buddha never thought of founding a new religion. Mr. Dutt who, in his admiration for Buddha, yields to none, admits : "He (Buddha) had made no new discovery ; he had acquired no new knowledge."\* And again : "It would be historically wrong to suppose that Gautama Buddha consciously set himself up as the founder of a new religion. On the contrary, he believed to the last that he was proclaiming only the ancient and pure form of religion which had prevailed among the Hindus, among Brahmans, Sramans, and others, but which had been corrupted at a later day."

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\* *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 206.

As a matter of fact, Hinduism recognised wandering bodies of ascetics who renounced the world, performed no Vedic rites, and passed their days in contemplation, (*See Ante*, p. 98).—Such bodies were known as *Bikshus* in the Hindu law books and were generally known as *Sramans*. Gautama founded only one sect of *Sramans* among many sects which then existed, and his sect was known as that of the *Sakyaputriya Sramans* to distinguish them from others. He taught them relinquishment of the world, a holy life, and pious meditation, such as all sects of *Sramans* recommended and practised.”\*

## § 2.—REASONS WHY BUDDHISM BECAME A DISTINCT RELIGION.

It may be asked how did then Buddhism become a new and distinct religion? In order to answer this question, we should know what the state of the Vedic religion was when Buddha lived and taught.

The period immediately preceding the advent of Buddha forms one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Vedic religion. The pure and noble religion of the Vedas and the Upanishads had degenerated into dead forms, unmeaning rites, and cumbersome ceremonies. The Vedic division of *varnas*, (originally based on division of labour and on merit), had degenerated into a system of hereditary castes in the worst sense of the term. As a natural consequence, the Brahmans, secure of honour merely by their birth, neglected the study of the Vedas, and the practice of virtue, for which their forefathers had been justly revered. This moral and religious degeneration could not remain confined to the

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\* *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 181-2.

Brahmans only. The *Sanyasis*, no longer possessed of religious knowledge, inward purity, and meekness of spirit, only made a show of their ascetic practices. The people, too, were no longer as pious and virtuous as in the Vedic times, and became the worshippers of forms, and slaves of luxury. The simple diet of the ancient Aryans was replaced by a flesh diet. And, in order that flesh-eating may have the sanction of religion, animals were slaughtered and sacrificed in *yajnas*.

Such was the state of the Vedic religion, or rather of Aryan society, at the time when Buddha appeared. He was particularly struck by the last two evils, namely, *animal sacrifices*, and *caste system*. His tender and loving heart could not bear the shedding of so much innocent blood in the sacred name of religion. And his noble soul rebelled against the ignoble and invidious distinction of caste. The latter especially called forth all his philanthropic enthusiasm, and his innate love for his fellow beings. In fact, the evil had become so serious that it had been condemned by many writers, even before the time of Buddha. It pervaded all social, religious, and political, affairs, and affected even the law of the land. There was one law for the Brahmans, another for the Kshatriyas, a third for the Vaishyas, and a fourth for the Sudras. The Brahmans were treated with undue leniency, and the Sudras with undue severity. Such a state of affairs could not last long. The Sudras, for whom there was no religious knowledge, no social respect, however righteous and virtuous they might be, only wanted an opportunity to throw off their chains. The victims of an unjust system, which rigidly excluded them from higher society, they sighed for a change.

Even many large-hearted and liberal minded *dwijas* (Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas), sympathised with their aspirations. The time was, therefore, ripe for a revolution, and it required no extraordinary foresight to see that the time would come when society would rebel against the pernicious system and break its chains. That time did come. A Kshatriya of royal family declared that merit and not birth determined a man's position in society. Numberless persons gathered around him. We can easily imagine how anxiously the persecuted Sudras must have joined him. But even many twice-born Aryas responded to his just and righteous appeals, and Buddhism soon spread from one corner of the land to the other.

This is the true secret of Buddha's success, and of his becoming though unconsciously the founder of a new religion. Like most great reformers he was, to a great extent, the creature of his age. In declaiming heroically against the unscrupulous and merciless slaughter of animals, and the unnatural and unrighteous distinction of caste, he struck the chord which vibrated in the hearts of most of his contemporaries. Had he been born in an age when these evils did not exist, he would have made little impression; indeed, there would have been no occasion for his reform. But living in the age in which he did, he naturally attracted a large number of followers, and unconsciously became the founder of a new faith.

### § 3. DESTRUCTIVE OR NEGATIVE SIDE OF BUDDHISM.

This is all that need be said about the *destructive* part of Buddha's teachings. His attacks were directed

chiefly against two evils. As Mr. Dutt remarks: "Gautama was not a thoughtless destroyer, nor a heedless and enthusiastic opponent of all that was orthodox and ancient. He did not raise his hand against a single institution or belief which he did not consider positively mischievous and a later corruption of the old religion. He denounced caste, because he found it mischievous, and *believed it to be a late and corrupted form of ancient Brahmanism*. And he proclaimed the fruitlessness of Vedic rites, because he found them, *as then practised*, to be silly, meaningless, dead forms, attended with needless cruelty to animals and loss of life." The italics are ours.

But it may be asked: Did Budha not deny the existence of God, and consequently also the revealed character or authority of the Vedas? As regards the belief in God, we may say that Buddha was an agnostic rather than an atheist. The denial of God, or even of the revelation of the Vedas, was no essential part of Buddha's doctrine. It seems that he was contented with preaching self-culture and self-restraint, and did not take the trouble of attempting a solution of the great problem of the Universe.—Is this world eternal and everlasting? If not, how did it come into existence? Perhaps he thought that the problem could never be solved satisfactorily. His disciples often† pressed the enquiry on him, but he made no categorical reply.

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\* *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. ?

† For example, once a certain Malyukyaputta put this question to Gautama. But he answered: "Have I said, come Malyukyaputta and be my disciple, I shall teach thee whether the world is everlasting or not?" "That thou hast not said, sire," replied Malyukyaputta. "Then," said Gautama, "do not press the inquiry." *Kula Malyukyaovād, Majjhima Nikaya* (quoted in *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 286).

Indeed, there are many passages\* in Buddhist works, which show that he discouraged such inquiries and disputations. To him religion consisted only in the practice of virtue. In other words, Gautama Buddha only looked at the practical side of religion, and neglected theoretical or metaphysical side altogether. This was the great weakness of early Buddhism. Questions like these must be asked and must be answered one way or the other. And a system of religion, which ignores or evades them, cannot satisfy the cravings of the human heart. Later Buddhists have made up for this deficiency by declaring that the Universe has been in existence, as it is, for all eternity, and therefore needs no creator, thus making their religion purely atheistic. But this was not Buddha's position. He would not say "whether the world is everlasting or not." Still, though originally agnostic, Buddha's doctrine, like every system of agnosticism, led to atheism. This, as we have already noticed, is the great defect of Buddhism *as a system of religion*, however excellent it may be *as a system of morality*. It was this which finally sealed its fate in India. Buddhism spread in this country because originally it was only a righteous protest against the unjust distinctions of caste and the cruel slaughter of animals, and an appeal for the practice of virtue and morality. It was swept away because it led to atheism.

Being sceptical about the existence of the Deity, Buddha could not possibly believe in a Divine Revelation. His attitude towards the Vedas, however, was not one of hostility but of indifference, and his indifference was due partly to his ignorance of the Vedas, and

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\* For example, see *Pasū-sutta*, *Sutta Nipat*, also *Mahamūyaka Sutta*, *Sutta Nipat*.



partly to the belief of the age that the Vedas sanctioned slaughter of animals and distinction of castes as then prevalent. Had he been well-versed in the Vedas, and had he preached his doctrine of love and equality on the authority of a correct interpretation of the Vedas, he would have become, like Swami Dayananda Saraswati of our own times,—a Vedic reformer—instead of being the apostle of a new faith. Or, if the people of that age had been less conservative, better informed about the real teachings of the Vedas, and consequently more ready to reform their own religion rather than renounce it for another, then, also, the evil of a new religion taking its rise in the country, in opposition to the older religion, would have been averted, and India would not have been split in twain, and ravaged by internecine wars which were waged for several centuries between the followers of the two faiths.

#### § 4.—CONSTRUCTIVE OR POSITIVE SIDE OF BUDDHISM.

As for the *constructive part* of Buddha's teachings, we have not much to say. He only preached the noble precepts of Vedic religion: self-culture, self-restraint, love for mankind, love for all sentient beings, practice of virtue, and inward purity. The *four cardinal truths*, which Buddha preached, are: (i) that life is suffering; (ii) that the cause of suffering is thirst or desire; (iii) that the extinction of thirst leads to cessation of suffering; and (iv) that this extinction of thirst can be achieved by the eight-fold path, *i. e.*, practice of (1) right belief, (2) right aspiration, (3) right speech, (4) right conduct, (5) right means of livelihood, (6) right exertion, (7) right mindfulness, and (8) right meditation,—(See Mahavagya I,

6, quoted in *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 231.) We need hardly say that these truths occur repeatedly in the various books of Vedic religion and philosophy. As an example, we may quote the 2nd aphorism of *Nyaya Sutras*: दुःखं जन्मप्रवृत्तिदोष मिथ्याज्ञानानामुत्तरोत्तरापाये तदन्तरापायादपवर्गः । न्याय १ । २

“Of suffering, attachment [to life], evil motive and false knowledge the extinction of one leads to the extinction of that which precedes it; and the extinction of suffering is *summum bonum* or emancipation.”\* This means that false knowledge leads to evil motives; evil motives to attachment to life; attachment to birth; and birth to suffering; and that in the same order, the extinction of one would lead to the extinction of the other. In other words, suffering is a necessary accompaniment of birth or of life (the *first* truth of Buddha); the cause of birth and consequently, of suffering is attachment to life which is the result of desire or thirst (the *second* truth of Buddha); the extinction of desire and of attachment to life leads to the extinction of suffering (the *third* truth of Buddha); and right knowledge leads to extinction of desire and of attachment (part of the *fourth* truth of Buddha).

The five *commandments*, which are obligatory on all Buddhists, monks as well as laymen, are as follows:—†

- (1) Let not one kill any living being.
- (2) Let not one take what is not given to him.
- (3) Let not one speak falsely.
- (4) Let not one drink intoxicating drink.
- (5) Let not one have unchaste sexual intercourse.

\* *Nyaya Sutras*, I, 2.

† *Dhammika Sutta Nipala*, quoted in *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 232.

Mr. Dutt observes that "these were, no doubt, suggested by Vashishta's five *Mahapatakas*." We would, however, trace them to the five *yamas* or rules of conduct, prescribed by Patanjali in his Yoga Sutra :—

अहिंसा संत्यास्तेय ब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमाः ।

योग अध० १-१ पा० २ सू० ३० ॥

"Not to kill any living being, not to speak falsely, not to commit theft, not to have unchaste sexual intercourse, not to indulge too much in luxuries or sensual pleasures, are the five *yamas* or rules of conduct."†

Buddhism, as preached by Buddha, is nothing but a system of morality, and Buddhist works abound in moral precepts, which may be easily traced to the books of the Vedic religion. As Mr. Dutt remarks : "Buddhim accepted this noble heritage from the ancient Hindus, and embalmed it in its sacred literature. In Gautama's categories of duties we find all that is noblest and best in the Dharma Sutras."‡

We have shown that Buddha did not preach any new religion or any new truth. He only repudiated certain evils which were no part of true Vedic religion, but had formed, at later date, an ugly crust over it. In other respects, he preached the precepts of the Vedic religion. *Buddhism* therefore—by which term we here understand the noble precepts taught by Gautama—is based on the Vedic religion.

\* The five *mahapatakas* or great sins, according to Vashishta, are :—"The violation of a guru's bed; the drinking of spirituous liquor, murder, theft, and spiritual or matrimonial connection with outcastes" (I, 19 to 21), quoted in *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 108.

† Yoga Sutras, I, ii, 30.

‡ *Ancient India*, Vol. II, p. 208.

## CHAPTER IV.

### JUDAISM IS BASED ON ZOROASTRIANISM.

#### § 1. PRELIMINARY.

We now come to Judaism, which, though at present having but a small number of followers, has given rise to two great religions of the world, *i. e.*, Mahommadanism and Christianity. But although the religion of the few and the despised, it should not be supposed that Judaism lacks supporters. The Mahommadans admit, and the Koran itself is very explicit on the point—that their religion is founded almost exclusively on Judaism. Therefore though frequently accusing the Jews of tampering with their scriptures, and of suppressing some prophecies supposed to have been contained in them about Mahommed, they yet regard Moses and other writers of the Old Testaments, as God-sent prophets, and would naturally resent any attempt to prove that the Jewish prophets had derived their inspiration from the Parsis. Similarly, Christians whose religious doctrines are by the confession of Jesus Christ himself, based on the Jewish religion, would be equally anxious to establish the revealed nature of Judaism. Now considering that those to whom we are chiefly indebted for the great antiquarian researches of the present age, are mostly Christians, we need not be surprised if we do not find much in the way of critical enquiry into

the origin of Judaism. Few Christian scholars are willing to acknowledge the indebtedness of Judaism to Zoroastrianism. As an example of the above we may refer to Prof. Max Müller's remarks on Dr. Spiegel's position that the religious ideas of the Genesis are borrowed from the Avesta. Dr. Spiegel's book has not, so far as we know, been translated into English, and our knowledge of it is derived only from Prof. Max Müller's criticism of the same in his *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I. Prof. Max Müller does not think that Dr. Spiegel has established his points, and exclaims in the very first sentence of this chapter :—" O that scholars could have the benefit of a little legal training, and learn at least the difference between what is probable and what is proven."\* He then goes on :—" We were much pleased therefore on finding that Prof. Spiegel, the learned editor and translator of the Avesta, had devoted a chapter of his last work, *Eran das land Zwischen dem Indus & Tigris* to the problem in question. We read the Chapter, *Avesta die Genesis oder die Beziehungen der Eranier Zu den Semiten* with the warmest interest and when we had finished it, we put down the book with the very exclamation with which we began our article."† Prof. Max Müller has, however, nothing to find fault with his adversary's scholarship and erudition. He says : " We do not mean to say anything disrespectful to Prof. Spiegel, a scholar brimful of learning, and one of the two or three men who know the Avesta by heart. He is likewise a good semitic scholar and knows enough of Hebrew to form an independent opinion of the language, style, and general character

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\* *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 143.

† *Ibid*, p. 146.

of the different books of the Old Testament." Still he does not consider the evidence adduced by Prof. Spiegel to be sufficient, and counsels the learned Doctor to observe proper caution in deducing his conclusions. This is what he says. "But in a question like this.....it is absolutely necessary for a new witness to be armed from top to toe, to lay himself open to no attack, to measure his words and advance step by step in a straight line to the point that has to be reached. A writer like Dr. Spiegel should know that he can expect no mercy, but invites the heaviest artillery against the floating battery which he has launched into the troubled waters of Biblical criticism."<sup>\*</sup>

With all respect to the learned Professor we may remark that notwithstanding that large-hearted liberality, breadth of views, and sincere desire for truth which characterizes Prof. Max Müller's writings, his language in this place savours of a little impatience for criticism made on his own religion.

## § 2.. CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION.

There is, however, to our mind, evidence enough to prove that Judaism is based mainly on Zoroastrianism. The similarities between the two religions are so many and so striking as to necessitate the conclusion that the ideas of one passed into the other. We wonder if Prof. Max Müller could deny this. But he says:—"Only before we look for such ideas, it is necessary to show the channel through which they could possibly have flowed either from the Avesta into Genesis or from Genesis into Avesta."<sup>†</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup> *Chips*, Vol. I, pp. 146-147.

<sup>†</sup> *Chips*, Vol. I, p. 140.

Such a channel, however, can be easily pointed out. Dr. Spiegel has tried to show that both Zoroaster and Abraham lived at the same time (about 1920 B. C. according to the Bible), and at the same place (Arran or Haran). The Bible tells us that Abraham was a native of Haran,\* while we learn from the Zēd Avesta, that Zoroaster was born in *Aryanam Veiga*. Not only Prof. Max Müller but many other eminent philologists are of opinion that *Aryanam Veiga* (which means 'the seed of Aryans') must have been situated to the extreme-east of Persia, between the Oxus and Jaxartes, and was so-called because it was the Aryan home from which both the Indians and Iranians came. Dr. Spiegel thinks that the Persian *Arran* is only a contraction of the older name *Aryanam Veiga*. Prof. Max Müller acknowledges the probable accuracy of this hypothesis; says he:—"Dr. Spiegel says that Zoroaster was born in Arran. This name is given by mediæval Mahommadan writers to the plain washed by the Araxes, and was identified by Anquetil Duperron with the name *Aryan Veiga*, which the Zenda Avesta gives to the first created land of Ormazd. We think that Dr. Spiegel is right in defending the geographical position assigned by tradition to Aryan Veiga.....Nor do we hesitate that the name (*Aryan Veiga*, i.e., the seed of the Aryans), might have been changed into Arran:"† Prof. Max Müller, however, does not concur with Dr. Spiegel in holding that Haran and Arran are identical. He objects: "Then how are the aspirate, and a double r to be explained." With due deference to the Professor's erudition we feel bound to remark that this is but

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\* *Vide* Genesis, XII, 4.

† *Chips*, Vol. I, pp. 149.

weak criticism. As regards the double *r* it is to be noticed that it occurs in the Persian Arran and not in the Hebrew Haran. And it is a well-known fact that words passing from one language into another, generally tend to become simpler in their sounds, and drop one of the components of their compound or double consonants. The following examples will illustrate the point :—

Prakrita or Pali.	Sanskrit.	Hindi.
Sabba सब्ब	(Sarva सर्व)	Sab सब
Sachcha सच्च	(Satya सत्य)	Sach सच
Khetta खेत्त	(Kshetra क्षेत्र)	Khet खेत

The other part of the question, "How is the aspirate to be explained?" might perhaps appear to be a serious objection. But there are numerous examples of words which take an aspirate in passing into another language. For example, the Zend word for seven '*hapta*' (Sanskrit *Sapta*) is changed into Persian '*Haft*'; Zend '*Kasura*' (Sans. *Shwasura* meaning father-in-law) is changed into Persian *Khusar*. It might be urged, however, that in *Haran* it is the initial *h*. But there are examples of such a change also. For instance, Zend *Ashta* (Sans. *Ashta* meaning 'eight') is changed into Persian '*hasht*,' Zend *Ashta-iti* (Sanskrit *ashti* meaning 'eighty') into Persian *Hashtad*. Similarly, Zend *Asti* (Sanskrit *Asti* meaning 'is') becomes in Persian alternatively *has*t and *ast*. Now it can hardly be denied that modern Persian language is derived from the older Zend language. Shall we then ask "How is the aspirate to be explained in these words," or, shall we on the strength of this objection deny the



identity of Persian 'hasht' and Zend Ashta, Persia Hashtad and Zend Ashta-iti. and so forth? Prof. Max Müller's objection, therefore, is hardly tenable and no case seems to have been made out against Dr. Spiegel's hypothesis that Arran and Haran are identical.

Prof. Max Müller himself suggests another channel. Says he: "Dr. Spiegel, having, as he believed established the most ancient meeting point between Abraham and Zoroaster, proceeds to argue that whatever ideas are shared in common by Genesis and the Avesta must be referred to that very ancient period when personal intercourse was still possible between Abraham and Zoroaster, the prophets of the Jews and the Iranians.....Now it is known that about the same time and the same place namely at Alexandria where the Old Testament was rendered into Greek, the Avesta also was translated into the same language, so that we have at Alexandria in the 3rd century B. C. a well-established historical contact between the believers in Genesis, and the believers in the Avesta, and an easy opening for that interchange of ideas which according to Dr. Spiegel could have taken place nowhere but in Arran, and at the time of Abraham and Zoroaster."

This might be taken as a fresh evidence of further exchange of ideas having taken place at a later period between the two religions: but it does not in our humble opinion rebut Dr. Spiegel's position that an interchange must have taken place as early as the time of Zoroaster and Abraham themselves. In fact it is hard to understand how the Professor's suggestion can fully explain the community of ideas between

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\* *Chips*, Vol. I, pp. 150-151.

the Genesis and the Avesta, since according to Prof. Max Müller, these two books were only translated, and not compiled at Alexandria in the third century before Christ. Dr. Spiegel's view that Abraham and Zoroaster were contemporaries is also corroborated by close resemblance, that we find in the characters of the two prophets. Professor Max Müller himself confesses: "We agree with Dr. Spiegel that Zoroaster's character resembles most closely the true semetic notion of a prophet. He is considered worthy of personal intercourse with the Ormuzd. He receives from Ormuzd every word though not, as Dr. Spiegel says, every letter of the law."<sup>\*</sup>

In fact so close is the resemblance that Dr. Haug remarks; "In several Mahommadan writings, especially in Vernacular Persian dictionaries, we find Zoroaster or, as he is there called, Zardushta, identified with Abraham the patriarch."<sup>†</sup>

Another opening for the flow of Zoroastrian ideas into Judaism is to be found in the historical event called the Babylonian Captivity. In 587 B. C. the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar invaded Palestine, reduced Jerusalem, took many of the Jews to his capital, destroyed their literature, and held them in captivity. About a century later Cyrus, the king of Persia, overthrew the Babylonian empire and allowed some of the Jews to return to Jerusalem with the object of re-establishing the Hebrew literature. It was after this return to Jerusalem that Ezra and Nehemiah edited and compiled in 450 B. C. the Old Testament, or according to those who deny the Mosaic authorship,

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<sup>\*</sup> *Chips*, Vol. I, p. 158.

<sup>†</sup> Haug's *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis*, p. 16.

it was then that they wrote the Pentateuch. Thus the most ancient books of the Jews must have been written, or at any rate, remodelled, after they had long lived among the Zoroastrians.

Madame Blavatsky not only supports this view but goes further in thinking that the whole story of Moses is a fabrication—a mere imitation of the story of the Babylonian King Sargon. “Ezra.....remodelled the whole Pentateuch. For the Glyph of Pharaoh’s daughter (the woman), the Nile (the Great Deep and Water) and the baby boy found floating therein in the ark of rushes, has not been primarily composed for or by Moses. It has been found anticipated in the Babylonian fragments on the tiles in the story of King Sargon, who lived far earlier than Moses. Now what is the logical inference? Most assuredly that which gives us the right to say that the story told of Moses by Ezra had been learnt by him while at Babylon, and that he applied the allegory told of Sargon to the Jewish law-giver. In short, the Exodus was never written by Moses but refabricated from old materials by Ezra.”\* Then in a footnote wherein she quotes from Mr. George Smith’s Assyrian Antiquities, the Madam adds:—

“The capital of Sargon, the Babylonian Moses, was the great city of Agadi, called by the semitics Akkad mentioned in Genesis X, 10, as the capital of Nimrod. Akkad lay near the city of Sippora on the Euphrates north of Babylon.† Another strange coincidence is found in the fact that the name of the neighbouring city of Sippora is the

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\* *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 319—320.

† *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 440, 441.

same as the name of the wife of Moses *Zipporah*.<sup>\*</sup> Of course the story is a clever addition of Ezra who could not be ignorant of it. This curious story is found in fragments of tablets from Kanyungik and reads as follows:—

- (1) Sargona, the powerful king, the king of Akkad am I.
- (2) My mother was a princess, my father I did not know. A brother of my father ruled the country.
- (3) In the city of Azupiran, which is by the site of the river Euphrates.
- (4) My mother, the princess, conceived me. In difficulty she brought forth.
- (5) She placed me in an ark of rushes, with bitumen my exit she sealed up.
- (6) She launched me in the river which did not drown me.
- (7) The river carried me to Akki, the water-carrier it brought me.
- (8) Akki the water-carrier in tenderness of bowels lifted me, &c., &c."

And now Exodus II:—

'And when she (Moses' mother) could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of her rushes, and dobed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein, and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.'"<sup>†</sup>

We thus see that there is no difficulty in pointing out the channel through which the Jews borrowed

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\* Exod. II.

† *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 319—320.

their ideas from the Parsis. We shall now proceed to show the SIMILARITY OF DOCTRINES between the two religions. That they have many common doctrines has long been suspected even by Christian writers. Dr. Haug, a celebrated authority on the Parsi religion, admits this. After stating that the Zoroastrian religion was not so opposed to the Mosaic as the other ancient religions, he goes on to say: "The Zoroastrian religion exhibits even a very close affinity to, or rather identity with several important doctrines of the Mosaic religion and Christianity such as the personality and attributes of the Devil, and the resurrection of the dead which are both ascribed to the religion of the Magi, and are really found in the present scriptures of the Parsis."\*

We shall now treat of these common doctrines one after another.

### § 3.—THE IDEA OF GOD.

That the Bible and the Zend Avesta teach very much the same conception of the Deity is admitted by Dr. Haug in the clearest terms. He says: "Spitama Zarathushtra's conception of Ahura Mazda as the Supreme Being is perfectly identical with the notion of Elohim (God) or Jehova which we find in the books of Old Testament. Ahura Mazda is called by him the creator of the earthly and spiritual life, the lord of the whole universe in whose hands are all the creatures. He is the light and source of light, He is the wisdom and intellect."†

It is not a little remarkable that this similarity extends even to the names of the Deity which occur

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\* Haug's *Essays*, p. 4.

† Haug's *Essays*, p. 30.

in the Bible and the Zend Avesta. In the Harmuzd Yashta of the Zend Avesta Ahura Mazda enumerates twenty of his names. The first is *Ahmi* (Sanskrit *Asmi*) "I am." The last is *Ahmi yad Ahmi* (Sanskrit *asmi yad asmi*) "I am that I am." Both of these phrases are also the names of the Jehova in the Bible :—

"And God said into Moses :—I AM THAT I AM *chych ashar chych*. And he said ; Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel : I AM hath sent me unto you."\* The similarity in these names is too striking to be accidental. Dr. Spiegel is of opinion (though Prof. Max Müller holds it doubtful), that the word Ahura (the principal name of the Deity in the Zend Avesta) is identical in meaning with the word Jehova. "Ahura," he (Dr. Spiegel) says, as well as Ahu means lord, and must be traced back to the root *ah*, the Sanskrit *as*, which means to be, so that Ahura would signify the same as Jehve, he who is."†

The high reverence paid to the fire by the Pasis is only too well known. The days are gone by when the Zoroastrians were stigmatized as fire worshippers ; yet it must be admitted that they regard fire as the highest manifestation of God and his power. Yasna XXXVI—1, is entitled "to the fire as the symbol of Ahura Mazda who appears in his blazing flame." It is hardly just to say that it amounts to worshipping fire. And if it be so then, as H. P. Blavatsky truly remarks, "The Christian who says 'God is a living fire' and speaks of the pentecostal 'tongues of fire' and of the 'burning bush of Moses' is as much a fire

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\* Exodus, III, 14.

† Chips. Vol. I, p. 158.

worshipper as any other heathen.”\* In Deuteronomy it is said : “ The Lord thy God is a consuming fire.”† Thus like the Zend Avesta, the Bible also describes God as fire. In fact in the Pentateuch God generally appears in the form of fire, or encompassed by fires. For example, we read in Exodus : “ And the Lord said unto Moses, lo ! I come unto thee in a thick cloud that the people might hear when I speak with thee and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”‡ Again ..... “ And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.”§ With these verses before his eyes who will not see in Jehova an imitation of the Zoroastrian Ahura Mazda ?

#### § 4.—THE IDEA OF TWO RULING POWERS : GOD AND THE DEVIL.

This Zoroastrian dogma has likewise become an essential doctrine of Judaism, Christianity, and Mahomedanism. It is thus summed up by Prof. Darmesteter :—“ The world such as it is now, is two-

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\* *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 121.

† Deut, IV, 24.

‡ Exodus, XIX, 9, 16 and 18.

§ Exodus, XXIV, 17.

fold, being the work of two hostile beings, Ahura Mazda, the good principle, and Angra Mainyu, the evil principle. The history of the world is the history of their conflict, how Angra Mainyu invaded the world of Ahura Mazda and marred it, and how he shall be expelled from it at last."\*

This is also what Christians say of their God and Satan, and it need hardly be stated that as Ahura Mazda is the prototype of Jehova, so is Angra Mainyu the exact prototype of the Biblical Satan.

That the two conceptions are indetical, is admitted by Dr. Haug in very plain terms :—"Their views of Angra Mainyu," says he, "seem to differ in no respect from what is supposed to be the orthodox Christian view of the Devil."† And again he says :—"The Zoroastrian idea of the devil and the infernal kingdom coincides entirely with the Christian doctrine.—The Devil is a murderer and father of lies according to both the Bible and the Zend Avesta."‡

In the Bible Satan appears as a serpent. In Zend Avesta also he is the "burning serpent," *Achidahak*, (which word has probably given rise to the Persian word "Azdaha," a huge serpent or a dragon).

In the next chapter we shall seek to prove that the religion of the Zend Avesta is derived from the Vedas. But we may take this opportunity of showing how this idea of two contending powers in the world, though apparently peculiar to Zoroastrianism, can be traced to a beautiful allegory in the Veda, viz., the war of Indra and Vritra.

\* Zend Avesta, Part I, Introduction, p. lvi.

† Haug's *Essays*, p. 5?

‡ *Ibid*, p. 309.



This allegory which is very famous in Vedic literature\* has, like most other parts of the Veda, a two-fold meaning—an *exoteric* interpretation and an *esoteric* one, or as they are more appropriately called in Yas-ka's *Nirukta*, a *physical* meaning आधिदैविक, and a *spiritual* meaning आध्यात्मिक. According to the physical interpretation Indra is the sun; Vrittra means literally a coverer (from *vri* to cover) and is an epithet of the cloud which covers the sun. The sun sheds its bright light and genial heat upon this earth, and gives life to all animals and vegetables. Vrittra covers the sun and prevents its light and heat from coming to us and produces darkness though only temporarily. Thus a constant war is going on in the physical world between Indra, the source of light and Vrittra, the cause of darkness. When Vrittra gets the upper hand the sun is obscured and the world is enveloped in darkness. But ultimately Indra gets the victory; Vrittra is destroyed and falls down on the earth in the form of rain. Indra again appears in all its glory, and shines in its full lustre—all the more brilliant after he has destroyed his foe. It is this physical phenomenon which forms the *exoteric* or the *physical* interpretation of the allegory.

According to the *spiritual* meaning, *Indra* is God, the giver of light and giver of life, the source of all knowledge, all virtue, all righteousness, all happiness, —in short the source of all good. *Vrittra* then is the opposite principle, the principle of evil and darkness. As a perpetual struggle is going on in the physical world between light and darkness, so an eternal war is being waged in the moral world between good and

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\*. *Vide* Rig Veda, Mandal I, Sukta 32.

evil. As the sun illuminates the physical world, so does God, who is good and holy, the source of all spiritual light, brighten our intellect, enlighten our understandings and inspire our hearts with righteous motives. But the sun is sometimes hidden by clouds and then darkness envelopes the earth. Similarly the sun of righteousness is sometimes eclipsed by the clouds of wicked passions, and then darkness overspreads the soul. Lust, anger, greed, hate, jealousy, and the numberless temptations of the world forming the army of *Vrittra* besiege our soul and try to destroy that light of God which is enshrouded there. Thus a struggle ensues between *Indra* and *Vrittra*. The human soul becomes a battlefield where the armies of *Indra* and *Vrittra* stand face to face. The soul, sometimes, willingly yields to the cunning, wily, insidious and the serpent-like *Vrittra*. The result is moral anarchy and the reign of evil. The powers of *Indra*, viz., virtuous and righteous feelings retire from the soul which is no longer a fit abode for them, leaving it a prey to the powers of evil to which it has so readily abandoned itself. The light of *Indra* no more shines on the soul; a sort of moral darkness is produced in which the soul unable to distinguish between right and wrong plunges itself into the depths of vice and misery. From this wretchedness it is raised by the beneficent power of God after it has reaped the harvest of its evil choice.

This is the struggle between good and evil which is always going on in this world—the moral struggle of which we are conscious at every moment of our lives. It is this which makes the practice of virtue so difficult in this world and which is so beautifully portrayed in the above allegory.

One of the many names of *Vrittra* in the Veda "Ahi" (meaning also in classical Sanskrit a serpent).† It is this name which appears in the Zend Avesta, as "Azhi" or "Azhidahak" (Sanskrit Ahidahaka). Perhaps the two meanings of the Vedic word *Ahi* had little to do with each other. But in the Zend Avesta, they are altogether confounded, and Angra Mainyu or the evil principle is often described as a serpent. The Zoroastrian religion lent this doctrine to Judaism which in its turn gave it to Christianity and to Mahomedanism. Hence all the three Semetic religions represent the evil principle as a serpent. Professor Max Müller, though unable to gainsay these facts, raises this objection against the above hypothesis:—"But does it follow, because the principle of evil in the Avesta is called serpent, *azhidahaka*, that therefore the serpent, mentioned in the third chapter of Genesis must be borrowed from Persia. Neither in the Veda nor in the Zend Avesta does the serpent ever assume that subtle and insinuating form which it wears in Genesis."‡ This is much as to say that a son should be *exactly* like his father, or that the imitation should *in no way* differ from its original! Later on, however, the learned Professor seems to admit the probable accuracy of the hypothesis—"In later books such as Chronicles XXII, I, where Satan is mentioned as provoking David to murder Israhel (the very same provocation which in Samuel XXIV is ascribed to the anger of the Lord against the number Israel and Judah), and in all the passages

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\* E.g., see Rig Veda, Mandal I, Sukta 32, verses. 1. 2. 5. also Nighantu I, 10.

† See Amara Kosha I, viii, 6.

‡ Chips, Vol. I, p. 151

the New Testament where the power of evil is spoken of as a person, we may admit the influence of Persian ideas and Persian expressions though even here strict proof is by no means easy.....

As to the serpent in Paradise, it is a conception that might have sprung up among the Jews as well as among the Brahmans.\*

Is then the religion of the Vedas as dualistic as that of the Koran, the Bible and the Zend Avesta? No. And herein lies a superiority of Vedic theism to that of the other three books.

It should be clearly understood that the Vedic Vritra or Ahi is not a real and separate being endowed with distinct personality like God. He is only a personification of the negative and abstract conception, the absence of righteousness or godliness. The allegorical description of the moral struggle required that the source of good being a person, the principle of evil should at least be personified. But in the Zend Avesta the Azhi has already acquired a sort of *quasi*-personality, while in the Bible and the Koran Satan is almost as real a personage as God himself and altogether distinct from him.

The argument underlying this dualistic conception of God and Satan seems to be this:—In this world we find both good and evil; and as God is the source of good, so there must be a second person who is the source of evil; this second person is Satan. But the idea is utterly unphilosophical. One might as well argue: Light and darkness are two opposite things. The sun is the source of light; therefore there must be some other heavenly

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\* *Ohips*, Vol. I, p. 155.

body which is the source of darkness. The fallacy lies in the false assumption that light and darkness are two separate things. In point of fact light is the real thing, while darkness is only a name given to the absence or abnegation of light. Similarly righteousness is the real thing, while unrighteousness is only the absence of righteousness. Where the sun shines, there is light; where the sun's rays do not reach, there is darkness. Similarly the soul which is illuminated by the light of God is righteous—while that soul which does not receive or accept divine light is unrighteous and may be said to be in darkness.

Even in the Zend Avesta the personality of Satan is doubtful. Professor Darmesteter, L. H. Mills and many other scholars affirm it; but Dr. Haug denies it in the following clear terms:—"A separate evil spirit of equal power with Ahur Mazda and always opposed to him is entirely foreign to Zoroastrian theology, though the existence of such an opinion among the ancient Zoroastrians can be gathered from some of the later writings, such as Vendidad."<sup>\*</sup>

Thus according to Dr. Haug Angra Mainyu is not a separate person; but there is no questioning the personality of the Biblic and the Koranic Satan. This shows how a sublime truth of the Vedas has first been misunderstood, and slightly changed, and then degenerated into a ridiculous myth and unphilosophical dogma.† This also illustrates how the

<sup>\*</sup> Haug's *Essays*, p. 303.

† This Vedic allegory has similarly degenerated in the *Puranas* where the goods headed by their king Indra are represented as warring with the demons or *asuras*.

doctrines of the other religions of the world which appear peculiar to them are only perverted forms of the Vedic truth.

### § 5.—ANGELS.

It has been already said in Chapter II § 1 that the idea of angels which the Jews lent to Mahommedanism is identical with the Zoroastrian conception of the Yaztas."

"The Jews," says Dr. Sale, "learnt the names and offices of those beings (angels) from the Persians as they themselves confess (Talmud Hieros in Ros-thashan). The ancient Persians firmly believed the ministry of angels and their superintendence over the affairs of this world (as the Magians still do), and therefore assigned them distinct charges and provinces, giving their names to their months and the days of their months. Gabriel they called Sarush, and Ravan Bakhsh or the *giver of souls*, in opposition to the contrary office of the angel of death to whom among other names they gave that of Mardad, or the *giver of death*. Michael they called Beshter who according to them provides sustenance for mankind. The Jews teach that the angels were created of fire, that they have several offices, that they intercede for men and attend them. The angel of death they name Duma, and say he calls dying persons by their respective names at their last hour."

The Parsis also believe in seven archangels (*viz.*, Vohu-Mano, Asha-Vahishta, Kshattria-Vairya, Spenta-Armaiti, Haurvatad, and Amertad with Ahur Mazda as their head), who are called the Amesha-

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\* Sale's Koran, Prel., Dis. p. 56.

spentas.\* Mr. L. H. J. Mills says that "the idea...as giving the designation spirit to the Amesha-spentas may well have been the original of the seven spirits [in the Bible †] which are before the throne of God."†

### § 6.—COSMOGONY.

According to the Zend Avesta the world was made in six periods. The order in which the different parts of the universe were created is substantially the same as that given in the Bible. In order that the reader may be better able to see the similarity

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\* According to Dr. Haug, the Amesha-spentas rightly understood are no separate beings, but only represent the best gifts which Ahura Mazda confers on his true worshippers. Says he :—

"The several names by which we find the Amesha-spentas called, viz., Vohu-Mano, Asha-Vahishta, Kshattria-Vairya, Spenta-Armaiti, Haurvatad, Amertad, are frequently mentioned in the Gathas ; but they are, as the reader may clearly see from the passages, (see Yas XLVII, 1), as well as from the etymology, nothing but abstract names and ideas representing all the gifts which Ahura Mazda as the only Lord grants to those who worship him with a sincere heart by always speaking truth, and performing good actions. In the eyes of the prophet they were no personages, that idea being imported into the sayings of the great master by some of his successors" (Haug's *Essays*, p. 805-806).

The meanings of the six names given above are as follow :—

Vohu-Mano = The good mind.

Asha-Vahishta = The best truth or righteousness.

Kshattria-Vairya = Abundance of every earthly good.

Spenta-Armaiti = Devotion or piety.

Haurvatad = Health.

Amertad = Immortality.

† *Vide* Revel, VIII, § 2.

‡ Zend Avesta, Part III, p. 145.

between the two accounts, we place them side by side:—

**Zoroastrian account of  
Cosmogony,**

(As summed up by Dr. Haug).

In the first period heaven was created; in the second, the waters; in the third, the earth; in the fourth, the trees; in the fifth, the animals; and in the sixth, man.\*

**Mosaic account of  
Cosmogony,**

On the first day heaven and earth were created; on the second, firmament and waters; on the third, dry land, grass, the birds and fruit trees; on the fourth, lights, the sun, the moon, the stars; on the fifth, moving creatures, winged fowls, great whales; on the sixth, living creatures, cattle, creepers, beasts, men.†

Professor Max Müller, while reviewing Dr. Spiegel's work, makes the following remarks on this similarity:—"We proceed to a second point—creation as related in Genesis and the Avesta. Here we certainly find some curious coincidences. The world is created in six days in Genesis, and in six periods in the Avesta, which six periods together form one year. In Genesis the creation ends with the creation of man, so it does in the Avesta. On all other points Dr. Spiegel admits the two accounts differ, but they are said to agree again in the temptation and the fall. As Dr. Spiegel has not given the details of the temptation and the fall from the Avesta, we cannot judge of the points which he considers to be borrowed by the Jews from the Persians."‡

\* Haug's *Essays*, p. 192.

† See Genesis i, 1—26.

‡ *Chips*, Vol. I, p. 154.



Even laying aside the doubtful agreement in point of the temptation and the fall, there is, to our mind, still a resemblance between the above two accounts of cosmogony which is too close to be accidental.

It will be seen that the Zoroastrian account of cosmogony is essentially in accordance with the researches of physical science, which have established that the formation of a nebulous mass was the first stage in the creation, or more accurately speaking, evolution of the universe; that it was in a subsequent stage that our planet was detached from the whole mass and formed into a separate globe; and that vegetables, animals, and men were then formed in successive ages, one after the other.

The Yajur Veda also describes the creation of the universe in the same order.

ततो विराडजायत विराजो अधिपुरुषः ।

स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद् भूमिमथो पुरः ॥

तस्माद् यज्ञात् सर्वद्वृतः संभृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।

पशूंस्तर्हिचक्रे वायव्यानारण्या ग्राम्याश्च ये ॥

तं यज्ञं वर्हिषि प्रौक्षन् पुरुषं जातमग्रतः ।

तेन देवा अयजन्त साध्या ऋषयश्च ये\* ॥

यजु० अ० ३१ मं० ५, ६, ९,

“ Then a shining\* (or nebulous) mass was produced. This shining mass was supervised by the Supreme Spirit. Subsequently from this mass were separated the earth and other bodies. By that Adorable Being worshipped by all were then produced the vegetables forming food, etc. He also made the animals, those of the air, those of the forest and

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\* विराद् is derived from वि (prefix) + राज् to shine, and is, therefore, interpreted to mean a shining mass.

domesticated ones. He also created men including sages and seers who by contemplation, then worshipped Him, the Adorable, and Supreme Spirit existing from the beginning.”\*

It will be noticed that the Zoroastrian account is more consistent with the Vedic account. The fact is that Zoroastrian cosmogony, of which Mosaic account is rather an imperfect copy, is itself founded on Vedic cosmogony.†

### § 7.—RESURRECTION.

“THE resurrection of the dead,” says Dr. Haug, “is a genuine Zoroastrian doctrine.”‡ Again he says:—The belief in the resurrection of the body at the time of the last judgment also forms one of the Zoroastrian dogmas.”§

The Jews who, as has been already shown, || lent this doctrine to the Christians and Mahommedans, had themselves borrowed it from the Parsis. We may quote from the Zend Avesta: “This splendour attaches itself to the hero (who is to rise out of the number) of prophets (called Soashyants) and to his companions, in order to make life everlasting, undecaying, imperishable, inputriscible, incorruptible, for ever existing, for ever vigorous, full of power (at the time) when the dead shall rise again, and imperishableness of life shall commence, making life lasting by itself (without further support). All the world will remain for eternity in a state of righteousness ;

\* Yajur Veda, XXXI : 5, 6 and 9.

† For a fuller account of Vedic cosmogony, as compared to the Zoroastrian, the reader is referred to Section 7 of Chapter V.

‡ Haug's *Essays*, p. 216.

§ *Ibid*, p. 311.

|| See Chapt. II, Section 2.

the devil will disappear from all those places whence he used to attack the righteous man in order to kill (him), and all his brood and creatures will be doomed to destruction.”\*

Here we find at once the doctrines of the coming of Messiah (called Saoshyant in the Parsi Scriptures), the Millenium, and the Resurrection exactly as they are taught in the Bible.

The Jews are also indebted to the Parsis for most of the details connected with this dogma. For instance, the Jewish idea of *the balance* in which every man's actions will be weighed on the day of judgment is originally a Zoroastrian doctrine. Says Professor Darmesteter in his prefatory note to Yasht XII:—“Rashmi Rāzista ‘the truest truth’ is the genius of Truth. He is one of the three judges of the departed with Mithra and Sraosh. He holds the balance in which the deeds of men are weighed after death. ‘He makes no unjust balance.....neither for the pious nor yet rulers; as much as a hair's breadth he will not vary, and he shows no favour’ (Minokhirad II, 120-121.)”† Again the idea of *the Bridge of Hell* which men will have to pass after their resurrection is also borrowed from the Zoroastrian, as already observed in Chap. II, § 2 (iii).

The late Dr. A. Kohut, Chief Rabbi of Belgrade, in his Essay published in *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, ‡ confesses the indebtedness of the Jews to the Parsis about some other

\* Zamyad Yasht XIX, 89-90.

† Zend Avesta, Part II, Roshn Yasht, p. 168.

‡ The part taken by the Parsi religion in the formation of Christianity and Judaism. Translated from the German of the late Dr. Kohut, Chief Rabbi, Belgrade. Printed at Bombay Fort Printing Press, Parsee Bazar Street, Fort, 1890, A. D.

minor details connected with this doctrine. We shall instance a few of the points noticed by him :—

(1) According to both religions the soul hovers round the body for three days after death. The learned Rabbi quotes from a Parsi Scripture, *Sadder Bundesh* : “ The soul remains for three days in this world at that spot where it had taken its departure from the body. It seeks the body and hopes that it may be possible once more to enter the body”<sup>\*</sup>. (vide also Vendidad XIX, 91—96, where the same thing is taught). Dr. Kohut compares with the above the following extract from Jerus, Berach :† The soul “ hovers round the body for three days long unwilling to be separated therefrom.”

(2) According to a Parsi book *Jamaspname*, “ in the last days great miseries are to fall on men ; plagues and diseases will prevail. The armies of the Greeks, Arabs and Romans are to fight great battles on the banks of the Euphrates.”‡ Dr. Kohut speaks of similar wars predicted in the Jewish books and says : “ These wars...will herald the coming of the times of the Messiah ; it will become a saying : ‘ When kingdoms war with one another, hope for the Advent of the Messias’ (cf. Genes. Rabba, Ch. 42). The Midrasch (Jalkut § 359) follows the *Jamaspname* in making the warring nations : the Persians, the Arabs, and the Romans.” §

(3, “ So further,” says Dr. Kohut, “ as the tradition of the Parsis maintains that before Soashyant two prophets (saviours) are to come to herald the time

\* Quoted on page 7 of the above.

† *Ibid*, page 13.

‡ Quoted on page 22.

§ *Ibid*, page 24.

of the Messiah and to prepare the road ;" so too the Midrasch Jalk, Jesaj, § 305, 518, states.....

"Therefore before the actual saviour there are to be two forerunners in the persons of the Messiah's Joseph and the son of the Messiah Ephraim."

(4) "Also the many times repeated statement (Midrasch Gen. R. C. 98, Midr. Jalk, Ps. § 682 : Midr. Ps. C. 21) that the Messiah will bring three commandments (or rather each Messiah one commandment apiece) recalls to mind similar belief of the Parsis that each saviour will bring a *nosk* not yet revealed."†

(5) In 31st Chapter of the *Bundehesh* the question is asked : "The body which the wind has carried away and the waves have swallowed how will it be recreated, how will the resurrection of the dead take place" ? To this answered Ormazd : "When through me the corn which is laid in the earth grows again and comes once more to life, when I have given to the trees veins according to their kinds,.....when I have placed the child in the mother,.....when I have given to the waters feet that they might run, I have created the clouds which take up the water of the earth and send it down again in rain where I will, .....when I have created each and all of these things, would it be harder for me to bring about the resurrection ?.....Remember, all this has been once and I have created it and can I not recreate what has already been ?"

"All these points," says Dr. Kohut, "recur in the Talmud and the Midrasch. The simile of the seed of corn which is laid in the lap of the mother

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\* *Ibid*, page 24.

† *Ibid*, page 20.

earth and afterwards shoots out into countless blades is often instanced as a proof of the Resurrection." Cf. Synh. 90 b ; Ketnb III b : Pirke D. R. Elzir C., 33 : "When the seed of the wheat which was buried naked in the earth springs up in the manifold clothings of the blades,—how much more will the virtuous rise again, who have been interred in their vestments." As the *Bundehesh* compares the miracle of the Resurrection with the miracle of Birth and of Rain, exactly so does the Talmud Taanith 2 a : Synh. 113 a : "Three keys lie in the hands of God, and are entrusted to no delegate ; these are : (1) the key of the Rain ; (2) that of Birth ; (3) that of the Resurrection." So in the Midrash Deuter. Rabba C. 7 and Genes. Rabbi C. 13 in which exactly, as in the *Bundehesh*, the miracle of the Resurrection is contrasted with the other two, and is judged the less difficult of accomplishment."<sup>e</sup>

#### § 5.—FUTURE LIFE : HEAVEN AND HELL.

The Jewish belief in a future life and in Heaven and Hell coincides in all its detail with what we find in the Zend Avesta, and is obviously borrowed from it. Dr. Haug says :—

"The idea of a future life and the immortality of the soul is very distinctly expressed already in the Gathas and pervades the whole of the later Avesta literature. The belief in a life to come is one of the chief dogmas of the Zend Avesta."<sup>†</sup>

And further :—

"Closely connected with this idea is the belief in Heaven and Hell, which Spitama Zearathushtra himself clearly pronounced in his Gathas. The name

\* Ibid, pp. 27-28.

† Haug's *Essays*, p. 311.

for Heaven is Garo-de-mâna (Garotman in Persian) 'house of hymns' because the angels are believed to sing hymns there (see Yas XXVIII, 10; XXXIV, 2) which description agrees entirely with the Christian idea as founded in Isaiah VI and the Revelation of St. John."\*

The close similarity which exists between the description of the paradise and the pleasures of heaven as given in the Jewish books, and the same as given in the Parsi books has already been noticed in Chapter II § 2 (iv). We may also mention another similarity noticed by Dr. Kohut. Says he: "The idea of the heaven of Eden being composed of precious stones, is I am positive, also taken from the Persians." The same idea is found in the beginning of Ch. 31 of the *Bundehesh* where it is said: "When through me the heavens in a spiritual state, glittering with precious stones, without pillars are permanent." According to the *Minokhired*, p. 136, the heavens are composed of a steel coloured substance which is also known as diamond" (Spiegel's Commentor, *Über das Avesta*, p. 449). The idea that the heavens consist of precious stones was so current that the Zend, 'Heaven,' and the 'Stone' were expressed by one and the same word, âsman."†

About the seven divisions of heaven, Dr. Kohut says: "As we meet with them in the later Parsi system so too in the Talmud (Chap. 12 b) we have the names of the seven heavens, six of which correspond to the Biblical names."‡

The similarity in the Parsi and Jewish accounts

\* *Ibid.*

† Dr. A. Kohut's *Essay*, p. 86.

‡ *Ibid.*, page 16.

of *hell* and its seven-fold divisions has already been noticed in Chap. II, § 2 (v).

The doctrine of eternal reward and punishment is probably also borrowed from the Zend Avesta. For instance, we find in Gatha Ushtavaiti: "The soul of the righteous attains to immortality, but, that of the wicked man has everlasting punishment. Such is the rule of Ahura-Mazda, whose the creatures are."<sup>\*</sup>

The Christian idea of salvation by Faith is also found in the Zend Avesta: "Happiness and Immortality will be the lot of the faithful."<sup>†</sup>

#### § 9. —SACRIFICE.

The practice of sacrifice, common among the Jews, was an imitation of the Zoroastrian practice which again is only another form of the Vedic *yajna* or *agnihotra*. *Agnihotra* occupies a very prominent place in the Vedic rituals, and has a whole mass of literature devoted to it. It is one of the five essential duties (*panch maha yajnas*) of the Aryas, which are to be performed daily. Every morning and evening the Aryas of the Vedic times said their prayers to God, and poured in fire offerings of clarified butter and fragrant things, in order to purify the atmosphere, and thus benefit all sentient beings. Besides daily *agnihotra* there were special *yajnas* to be performed on special occasions and festivities. Such was, for example, the *chaturmasiya ishti*, performed in the rainy season.

The Parsis, who learnt this practice from the Vedic Aryas, as they did the other practices and

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<sup>\*</sup> Gatha Ushtavaiti, Yasna XLV, 7.

<sup>†</sup> Zend Avesta, Part III, p. 21; Yasna XXXI.



doctrines of their religion, attached as great an importance to it as the Indian Aryas. But it is doubtful whether its true meaning was understood, and the ceremony at last degenerated among the Parsis, as it did in our own country about the time of Buddha, into an unmeaning ritual. Still they clung to it fast and performed it with scrupulous punctuality. This is, perhaps, the chief reason why they came to be regarded as fire-worshippers. The Parsis taught this ceremony to the Jews and in their hands the ceremony became still more corrupt. Being addicted to a flesh diet, the Jews made their offerings of flesh. Still the offerings were made through fire—an undeniable proof of the Zoroastrian origin of their ceremony. There are very clear proofs of it in the Bible. For instance, God says to Moses:—"An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings and the peace offerings, thy sheep and thine oxen : in all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and I will bless thee."\*

Again we read in Genesis—"And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar."†

The Mahommedans who borrowed this ceremony from the Jews, and not directly from Zoroastrians, could not understand the use of fire in it, and therefore dispensed with fire in their sacrifices, thus making them consist in the mere slaughter of an animal. What a sad change from the performance of the pure and beneficial ceremony of *agnihotra* to mere shedding of innocent blood—

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\* Exodus xx : 24.

† Genesis viii : 20.

## § 10.—SOME MINOR SIMILARITIES.

Besides these similarities in doctrines and religious practices, we might notice some others in minor points. For example—

- (i) In the Bible we are told that God gave His ten commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Thus we read : “ And Moses went up unto God and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, ‘ Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel. ’ ”\*

“ And Moses went up unto the mountain and a cloud covered the mount.”†

Similarly in the Zend Avesta we find Ahura Mazda conversing with Zarathushtra on the ‘ mountain of the holy questions. ’ “ Now he converses with Ahura on the mountain of the holy questions ”‡

- (ii) The story of the Ark of Noah bears a striking resemblance to that of the Vāra of Yima in the Zend Avesta. The Bible tells us :—“ God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth..... And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.

And the Lord said I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping things and the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.....

\* Exodus xix : 3.

† Exodus xii : 15.

‡ Fargard xii : 19.

And God said unto Noah:—"The end of all flesh is come before me." Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark. And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die. But with thee I establish my covenant, and thou shalt come into the ark, thou and thy sons and thy wife, and thy son's wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattles after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive."<sup>\*</sup>

Similarly in the Zend Avesta, Ahura Mazda informs Yima who is "the first man, the first king and the founder of civilization"<sup>†</sup> that the world is to be destroyed by "fatal winters."<sup>‡</sup> "And Ahura Mazda spake unto Yima, saying O fair Yima, son of Vivanghat! Upon the material world the fatal winters are going to fall that shall bring the fierce foul frost; upon the material world the fatal winters are going to fall, that shall make snow-flakes fall thick even an aredvi deep on the highest tops of mountains.

And all the three sorts of beasts shall perish."

Then Ahura Mazda advises Yima to make a *vara* in which to take shelter together with a pair of every living creature:

"25. Therefore make thee a *vara* long as a riding ground on every side of the square; and thither

<sup>\*</sup> Genesis vi : 5—8 ; 13—20.

<sup>†</sup> Zend Avesta, Part I, p. 10.

<sup>‡</sup> Some commentators translate the original expression into "rains," vide foot-note on p. 16 of Zend Avesta, Part I.

bring the seeds of sheep and oxen, of men, of dog, of birds, and of red blazing fires.

“27. Thither shalt thou bring the seeds of men and women, of the greatest, best and finest kind on this earth; thither thou shalt bring the seeds of every kind of cattle.

“28. Thither thou shalt bring the seeds of every kind of tree; thither thou shalt bring the seeds of every kind of fruit, the fullest of food and sweetest of odour. All these seeds shalt thou bring, two of every kind, to be kept inexhaustible there so long as those men shall stay in the *rara*.”\*

The similarities are obvious enough. Prof. Darmesteter observes: “The *rara* of Yima came to be nothing more than a sort of Noah’s Ark.”†

The story of the flood is also to be found in Shatapatha Brahmana (I, 8; i. 1) which, next to the Vedas, is one of the oldest books in Sanskrit literature. We are told there that a fish informed Manu—

“In such and such an year the flood would come;  
Therefore construct a ship and pay me homage,  
When the flood rises, enter thou the ship,  
And I will rescue thee. So Manu did.”‡

We are further told that the flood had swept away all creatures, but that Manu having been saved in his ship became the progenitor of the present race of men.

(iii) Dr. Spiegel finds a resemblance also between the Garden of Eden and the Paradise of Zoroastrians. The two rivers of the Garden of Eden, the Pishon and

\* Fargard II, Zend Avesta, Part I, pp. 15–17.

† Zend Avesta, Part I, p. 11.

‡ Metrical version by Monier Williams—see Indian Wisdom, second edition, p. 33.

Gihon, mentioned in the Bible<sup>\*</sup> have been identified by him with the Indus and the Jaxartes, and the two trees in Eden, the tree of knowledge, and the tree of life, are identified with the painless tree and the Gao-Kerena, bearing the white Hoama. With regard to the two rivers, Prof. Max Müller says:—"We believe with him (Dr. Spiegel) that there is little doubt as to the Pishon being the Indus and the Gihon the Jaxartes."<sup>†</sup> About the identification of the two trees, however, he remarks: "But we confess that until we know a good deal more about these two trees of the Iranians, we feel no inclination whatever to compare the painless tree and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, though perhaps the white Hoama tree might remind us of the tree of life, considering that Hoama, as well as the Indian Soma, was supposed to give immortality to those who drank its juice."<sup>‡</sup>

### § 11.—SUMMARY.

We have seen that the Jews have borrowed all the essential doctrines of their religion from the Zoroastrians. It may well be asked: What is there original in Judaism? What is there in it which is independent of Zoroastrianism, and for which it might claim to be a new and special revelation of God? The

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\* Genesis ii : 11—13.

† Chips, Vol. I, p. 156.

‡ Chips, Vol. I, p. 156-57.

Christians and the Jews will perhaps answer that the superiority of Judaism, and its claim to divine origin lies in its teaching a better monotheism than the dualistic creed of the Parsis. To this we reply that—to make no mention of Christian theism with its mysterious and inconceivable doctrine of trinity—even Judaism cannot boast of a higher and purer conception of God than Zoroastrianism. In a paragraph, part of which we have already quoted, Dr. Haug remarks:—"Spitama Zarathustra's conception of Ahura Mazda as the Supreme Being is perfectly identical with the notion of Eloheim (God) or Jehova which we find in the books of Old Testament. Ahur Mazda is called by him the creator of the earthly and spiritual life, the lord of the whole universe, in whose hands are all the creatures. He is the light and source of light: he is wisdom and intellect. He is in possession of all good things, spiritual and worldly, such as the good mind (*rohu-mano*): immortality (*amartat*), health (*haur ratat*), the best truth (*asharabista*), devotion and piety (*armaiti*), and abundance of every earthly good (*kshatravairya*). All these gifts he grants to the religious man who is upright in thoughts, words, and deeds. As the ruler of the whole universe, he not only rewards the good, but he is a punisher of the wicked at the same time—see Yas. XIII: 5. All that is created, good or evil, fortune or misfortune, is his work.—Yas. XLVIII: 4. A separate evil spirit of equal power with Ahura Mazda, and always opposed to him, is entirely foreign to Zoroastrian Theology, though the existence of such an opinion among the ancient Zoroastrians can be gathered from some of the later writings, such as Vendidad."<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> \* Haug's *Essays*, p. 80.

Elsewhere he observes : "That his theology was mainly based on monotheism, one may easily ascertain from the *gathas*, specially from the second." We quote verse 6 of the *Ahura gatha* :—"You cannot belong to both of them, *i.e.*, you cannot be worshipper of one true God and of many gods at the same time."† This is very clear. Indeed we shall look in vain in the Bible for a more emphatic and unambiguous statement of monotheistic doctrine.

As regards the charge of dualism, so often laid at the door of Zoroastrianism, we may say that neither Christianity nor Judaism, nor even Mahomedanism is free from it. Dr. E. W. West in his introduction to the translation of Pahlavi Texts (*Sacred Books of the East Series*) candidly says : "The reader will search in vain for any confirmation of the foreign notion that Mazda worship is decidedly more dualistic than Christianity is usually shown to be by orthodox writers, or for any allusion to the descent of the good and evil spirits from a personification of 'boundless time,' as asserted by strangers to the faith."‡ Nay, the dualism of the Bible and the Koran is only a grosser form of Zoroastrian dualism which is more philosophical than the former. Nothing can be clearer than the following words of Dr. Haug : "The opinion so generally entertained now that Zoroaster was preaching a dualism, that is to say, the idea of two originally independent spirits, one good and the other bad, utterly distinct from each other, and one contradicting the creation of the other, is owing to a

\* Haug's *Essays*, p. 301.

† Quoted by Haug in his *Essays*, p. 150.

‡ Quoted in Dr. S. A. Kapadia's "Teachings of Zoroaster and the Philosophy of the Parsi Religion," pp. 27-8.

confusion of his philosophy with his theology. Having arrived at the grand idea of the unity and indivisibility of the Supreme Being he undertook to solve the great problem which has engaged the attention of so many wise men of antiquity and even of modern times, *viz.*, How are the imperfections discoverable in the world, the various kinds of evils, wickedness, baseness, compatible with the goodness, holiness and justice of God?—This great thinker of remote antiquity solved this difficult question philosophically by the supposition of two primeval causes, which, though different, were united and produced the world of material things as well as that of the spirit; which doctrine may best be learnt from Yas. XXX (*see pp. 149—151.*)

“The Ahur Mazda, who produced the reality (*gaya*) is called *rohu mano*, “the good mind.” The other through whom “non-reality” (*ajyaili*) originates, bears the name *akam mano*, “the evil mind.” The good, true and perfect things which fall under the category of reality are the productions of the good mind; while all that is bad and delusive belongs to the sphere of non-reality, and is traced to the evil mind. They are the two moving causes in the universe united from the beginning, and therefore called the Twins (*Yima Sanskrit yama*). They are present everywhere in Ahur Mazda as well as in man.

“These two primeval principles, if supposed to be united in Ahura Mazda himself, are not called *rohu mano*, and *akam mano* but *spenta mainyush*, the beneficent spirit and *angra mainyush*, the hurtful spirit. That ‘angra mainyush’ is no separate being opposed to Ahura Mazda, is to be gathered



unmistakably from Yas. XIX : 9 (see p. 187), where Ahura Mazda is mentioning his two spirits, who are inherent in his own nature, and are in other passages (Yas. LVII : 2; see p. 189) distinctly called the two creators and the two masters (*payu*).....*Spenta mainyush* was regarded as the author of all that is bright and shining, of all that is good and useful in nature, while *angra mainyush* called into existence all that is dark and apparently noxious. Both are inseparable as day and night, and though opposed to each other, are indispensable for the preservation of creation.

"Such is the original notion of the two creative spirits who form only two parts of the Divine being. But in the course of time this doctrine of the great founder was changed and corrupted in consequence of misunderstandings and false interpretations. *Spenta mainyush* was taken as a name of Ahura Mazda himself, and then, of course *Angra mainyush* by becoming entirely separated from Ahura Mazda was regarded as the constant adversary of Ahura Mazda. Thus the dualism of God and Devil arose."

Thus, according to Dr. Haug's view, Zoroastrian conception of *Angra mainya* is only an attempt at an explanation of some hard problems in philosophy. But this can hardly be said of the biblical Satan whose separate personality is beyond question. We, therefore, fail to see how Judaism can pretend to teach a better monotheism than Zoroastrianism. Indeed the Zoroastrian conception of God is, in several respects, superior to the Jewish conception of the avenging, vascillating and wrathful Jehovah. The dualism mentioned above

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\* Haug's *Essays*, pp. 30 - 33.

is the only defect which mars, to a certain extent, the sublimity of Zoroastrian monotheism. We shall see in the next chapter that Vedic theism alone is free from this defect, and that alone is, therefore, the truest and purest, the most consistent and most philosophical monotheism.

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## CHAPTER V.

### ZOROASTRIANISM IS BASED ON THE VEDIC RELIGION.

We now come to the last link in the chain of our argument, *viz.*, the Vedic origin of Zoroastrianism. We shall begin with

#### § 1.—SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE VEDIC AND THE ZEND LANGUAGES.

THE similarity is so striking that Sir William Jones, the celebrated founder of the Asiatic Society, exclaims:—"When I perused the Zend glossary, I was inexpressibly surprised to find that six or seven words in ten are pure Sanskrit, and even some of their inflections formed by the rules of the Vyacaran as Yushmacam, the genetive plural of Yushmad."<sup>\*</sup>

A more celebrated authority on Zoroastrian religion and literature, *viz.*, Dr. Haug remarks:—

"The relationship of the Avesta language to the most ancient Sanskrit, the so-called Vedic dialect, is as close as that of the different dialects of the Greek language (Æolic, Ionic, Doric, or Attic) to each other. The languages of the sacred hymns of the Brahmins and of those of the Parsis are only the two dialects of the separate tribes of one and the same nation. As the Ionians, Dorians, Æolians, etc., were different

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<sup>\*</sup> Asiatic Researches, II, § 3, quoted by Darmesteter in Zend Avesta, Part I, Introduction, p. xx.

tribes of the Greek nation, whose general name was Hellenes, so the ancient Brahmans and Parsis were two tribes of the nation which is called Aryas, both in the Veda and Zend Avesta.”

Of the grammatical forms, Dr. Haug says :—

“ They are sō very similar, even when not quite identical that they are readily recognised by anyone who has a slight knowledge of Sanskrit. The strongest proof of the original identity of Sanskrit and Avesta grammatical forms is their harmony even in irregularities. Thus, for instance, the deviation of the pronominal declensions from that of the nouns are the same in both languages, as *ahmai*, ‘to him’ = Sans. ‘*asmai*’; *kahmai*, ‘to whom’ = Sans. ‘*kasmai*’; *yaisham*, ‘of whom’ (pl.) = Sans. ‘*yesham*.’ Also in declension of irregular nouns we find Span, “dog” = Sans. *Shvan*; sin. nom. *spâ* = Sans. *shvâ*; accusative *spanem* = Sans. *shvánam*; dative *suné* = Sans. *shuné*; genitive *suno* = Sans. *shunas*; pl. nom. *spano* = Sans. *shvanas*; gen. *sunam* = Sans. *shunám*: likewise *pathan*, ‘path’ = San. *pathin*; sing. nom. *panta* = Sans. *panthas*; inst. *patha* = Sans. *pathá*; pl. nom. *pantano* = Sans. *panthanas*; acc. *patho* = Sans. *pathas*; gen. *patham* = Sans. *patham*.”†

In nouns, he adds, “where three numbers and eight cases can be distinguished, it agrees almost completely with Vedic Sanskrit.”‡

The Rev. L. H. Mills, the learned translator of the Zend Avesta (*Sacred Books of the East Series*), says : “I have also, on the other hand, turned a large

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\* Haug’s *Essays*, p. 69.

† Haug’s *Essays*, p. 72.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 68.

portion of the Gathas into Vedic Sanskrit. (This, however, is practically a universal custom, as all words are compared with the Vedic, so far as analogies exist between the Gathas and the Riks.)<sup>\*</sup>

Prof. Max Müller says :—

“It is clear from his (Eugene Burnouf's) works and from Bopp's valuable remarks in his ‘Comparative Grammar’ that Zend in its Grammar and Dictionary is nearer to Sanskrit than any other Indo-European language ; many Zend words can be re-translated into Sanskrit simply by changing the Zend letters into their corresponding forms in Sanskrit.....It differs from Sanskrit principally in its sibilants, nasals, and aspirates. The Sanskrit *s*, for instance, is represented by the Zend *h*.....Where Sanskrit differs in words or grammatical peculiarities from the northern members of the Aryan family, it frequently coincides with Zend. The numerals are the same up to 100. The name for thousand, however, *sahasra*, is peculiar to Sanskrit and does not occur in any of the Indo-European dialects except in Zend, where it becomes *hazanra*.”<sup>†</sup>

To give the reader a clearer idea of the remarkably close relationship between the two languages, we sub-join a list of some important words showing their Sanskrit and Zend forms side by side, and also noting the slight verbal or phonetic alteration which a word undergoes when passing from

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\* Zend Avesta, part III, Preface, p. xv.

† *Chips*, Vol. I, pp. 82-3.

Sanskrit into Zend. The more important words appear in italics :—

(1) Sanskrit *S* स is changed into Zend *H*—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
<i>Asura</i>	असुर	<i>Ahura</i> <sup>o</sup>	Lord ; giver of breath or life.
<i>Soma</i>	सोम	<i>Homa</i>	A healing plant.
<i>Sapta</i>	सप्त	Hapt (Pers. Haft)	Seven.
<i>Māsa</i>	मास	Maha (Pers. Mah)	Month.
<i>Senā</i>	सेना	Henā	An army.
<i>Asmi</i>	अस्मि	Ahmi	I am.
<i>Santi</i>	सन्ति	Henti	They are.
<i>Asu</i>	असु	Anhu†	Life ; breath.
<i>Vivasvat</i>	विवस्वत्	<i>Vivanhuat</i> †	The sun ; also a proper name.

\* The word *asura* असुर is derived from असु (breath or life)+रा to give+ड (suffix ; or आसु (life)+रम to please or enjoy+ड. It literally means "Giver of life." In later Sanskrit the word has come to be used in a bad sense being a synonym of *Rakshasa* राक्षस an evil being. The idea then is "one who takes pleasure in, or enjoys, only his present life disregarding the next or future life ; one who only cares for his body and not for the spirit." But in the Vedas it is frequently used for God. We quote Dr. Haug : "In the older parts of the Riga Veda Samhitā, we find the word *Asura* used in as good and elevated sense as in the Zend Avesta. The chief gods such as *Indra* (R. V. I, 54, 3) ; *Varuna* (R. V. I, 24 14) ; *Agni* (R. V. IV, 2, 5, VII, 2, 3) ; *Savitri* (R. V. I, 35, 7) ; *Rudra* or *Shiva* (R. V. V, 42, 11), etc., are honoured with the epithet *Asura* which means 'living,' 'spiritual,' signifying the divine, in opposition to human nature" (Haug's *Essays*, pp. 268-269).

† Sometimes the Sanskrit *s* when changed into the Zend *h* takes *n* before it, i. e., becomes a nasal *h*, as in *Anhu* and *Vivanhuat*.

(2) Sanskrit *H* ह is changed into Zend *Z*—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Hridya	हृदय	Zardaya	Heart.
Hasta	हस्त	Zast (Pers. Dast)	Hand.
Varāha	वराह	Varāza	A boar.
Hota	होता	Zota	One who pours offerings into the sacred fire.
Ahuti	आहुति	Asuti	Offering.
Hima	हिम	Zima	Show ; winter.
Hve	ह्वे	Zbe	To call.
Bahu	बाहु	Bazu (Pers. Bazu)	Arm.
Ahi	अहि	Axi	(1) A serpent. (2) The evil principle. (3) Cloud.
Medha	मेधा	Mazda	Wisdom ; 'G o'd who is All-wise.

(3) Sanskrit *J* ज is changed into Zend *Z*—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Jana	जन	Zana	To produce
Vajra	वज्र	Vazra	Thunder bolt.
Jivha	जिह्वा	Hizva (Pers.* Zabān)	Tongue.
Aja	अजा	Aza	Goat
Janu	जानु	Zanu (Pers. Zanu)	Knee
Yajna	यज्ञ	Yasna	Worship ; sacrifice.
Yajata	यजत	Yasata	Worthy of worship ; angels.

\* The more closely allied form would be *Zivha*. But the consonants have changed places. This is very common in philological changes. Cp. Sanskrit *Chakra* चक्र meaning a circle or cycle and Zend *Charkha*, Sanskrit *Vakra* वक्र English curve, Sanskrit *Kashyapa* which comes from *Pashyaka* (one who sees all).

(4) Sanskrit *Shra* श्र is changed into Zend *Spa*—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Vishva	विश्व	Vispa	All.
Ashva	अश्व	Aspa	Horse.
Shvan	श्वन	Span	Dog
Krishashva	कृशाश्व	Geršhaspa	The name of a king.

(5) Sanskrit *Shra* श्र or *Sea* स्व is sometimes changed into Zend *q*—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Shvasura	श्वसुर	Qusura (Pers. khu- sar).	Father-in-law
Svapna	स्वप्न	Qafua	(1) Dream.
Svapa	स्वाप	Khvab (Pers.)	(2) Sleeping.

(6). Sanskrit *T* त is changed into Zend *Th*—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Mitra	मित्र	Mithra (Pers. Mithu)	(1) A friend. (2) The sun. (3) God.
Trila	त्रित	Tritha	A physician.
Trailana	त्रैतान	Thrailana (Pers. Faridun)	Do.
Mantra	मंत्र	Manthra	A sacred verse.

(7). Many words of Sanskrit have passed into Zend without any change ; while others have undergone only a slight phonetic change in vowel, etc.—

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Pitar पितर ( पितृ )		Pitar (Pers. Pidār)	Father.
Matar मातर ( मातृ )		Matar (Pers. Madar)	Mother.
Bhratar भ्रातर ( भ्रातृ )		Bratar (Pers. Bira- dar).	Brother



Sanskrit.	Zend.	Meaning.
Duhitar	दुहितर Dughter (Pers. Dukhtar)	Daughter.
Pashu	पशु Pashu	Animal.
Go	गो Gao (Pers. Gao)	Cow.
Ukshan	उक्षन् Ukshan	Ox.
Sthura	स्थुर Stoara	Steer.
Makshi	मक्षी Makhshi (Pers. Magas)	Fly, bee.
Shaiada	शरद Sâredha' (Pers. Sard)	Winter.
Vata	वात Bada (Pers. Bad).	Wind.
Abhra	अभ्र Abra (Pers. Abra)	Cloud.
Yava	यव Yavâ	Barley.
Vaidya	वैद्य Vaidhya	Physician.
Ritviṣa	ऋत्विञ् Rathvi	Priest.
Nameste	नमस्ते Namaste *	I bow to thee.
Manas	मनस Mano	Mind ; thought.
Yama	यम Yima	Ruler ; the name of a king.
Varuna	वरुण Varena	Names of the Diety.
Vrittrahan	वृत्रहन् Virithraghna	
Vayu	वायु Vayu	
Aryaman	अर्यमन् Aryaman	(1) Devotion; obedience. (2) Earth.
Armaiti †	अर्मैति Armaili	

\* We may quote from *Atarsh Yasht*, where the expression occurs. "Namasto atarsh, Mazda Ahurahya."

† "Armaiti, a female spirit in the Vedas, meaning:—(a), "devotion, obedience" (Rig Veda VII, 1, 6, 34, 21); (b) "earth" (Rig Veda X, 92, 4, 5,) is apparently identical with the archangel Aramaiti which name has, as the reader will have learnt from the third *Essay*, exactly the same two meanings in the Zend Avesta" (Haug's *Essays*, p. 274).

Sanskrit.		Zend.	Meaning.
Ishu	इषु	Ishu	Arrow.
Ratha	रथ	Ratha	Chariot.
Rathastha	रथस्थ	Rathaistha	Charioteer; warrior *
Gandharva	गान्धर्व	Gandharva	...
Prashu	प्रश्न	Frashua	Question.
Atharvan	अथर्वन्	Athrauan	Priest.
Gatha	गाथा	Gatha	A hymn; a sacred song.
Ishti	इष्टि	Ishti	Act of worshipping, or making offerings.
Apamnapat	अपान- पात	Apamnapat	The lightning borne in the clouds.
Chhandas <sup>†</sup>	छन्दः	Zend	(1) Metrical language. (2) Divine knowledge.

\* Dr. Haug derives the word 'Zend' from the root *zan* (corresponding with Sanskrit *jñā* to know), and interprets it to mean 'knowledge,' like the Sanskrit word "Veda." We, however, agree with Professor Max Müller that it comes directly from the Sanskrit word "Chhandas." Says he:—"I still hold that the name of Zend was originally a corruption of the Sanskrit word छन्दः Chhandas (i.e., metrical language, Cf. *Scandere*), which is the name given to the language of the Veda by Panini, and others. When we read in Panini's grammar that certain forms occur in Chhandas but not in the classical language, we may almost always translate the word छन्दः Chhandas by Zend, for nearly all these rules apply equally to the language of the Avesta." (*Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I. pp. 81-85).

It is noteworthy that the word Zend is used for the religious scriptures of the Parsis as well as for the language in which they are written. The reader need hardly be told that the word 'Chhandas' is used in exactly the same double sense (meaning the Vedas as well as the Vedic language).

Sanskrit.	Zend.	Meaning.
<i>Avastha</i> अवस्था *	<i>Avesta</i>	What is established
<i>Indra</i> इन्द्र	<i>Indrat</i>	ed.
<i>Dra</i> देव	<i>Daivat</i>	

It will not be uninteresting, if we here quote one or two verses of the Zend Avesta and re-translate them into Sanskrit, so as to enable the reader to see at a

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\* About the derivation of the word "Avesta." Dr. Haug remarks:—

"It might best be traced to *Avastha*, in the sense of "what is established" or "text," as was proposed by Mr. J. Muller in 1839.....A more satisfactory meaning can be obtained by tracing *avistak* to *avista* (past participle of '*vid* विद् "to know"), with the meaning "what is known," or "knowledge" corresponding nearly with *Veda*, the name of the sacred scriptures of the Brahmaus." (Haug, p. 121).

This latter etymology seems to us rather far-fetched—a strained and (as we think) unsuccessful attempt to trace the word "Avesta" to the very root (*vid*, "to know"), from which the word "Veda" is derived. We agree with Mr. Muller and hold that Avesta is only another form of Sanskrit अवस्था *Avastha* (the Sanskrit root स्था *stha*, to stand, assuming the form *stha* in Zend).

The Sanskrit word अवस्था is still used in the sense of 'stability, or fixity,' and though its use in the sense of "established law or order" is not familiar, we do use व्यवस्था (which is the word *avastha* with only the prefix *vi* added to it) in that sense (*vide* Apte's Sanskrit-English Dictionary).

† These two words have in Zend come to be used in a bad sense, *Daiva* meaning an 'evil spirit,' and *Indra* meaning the king of evil spirits. The reader will be strikingly reminded of how the word *Asura* has been similarly degraded in later Sanskrit. From the degeneration of these three words, some of the European scholars conclude that there was at some time probably a split between the Indians and the Zoroastrians. Professor Darmesteter, however, rejects this theory of a religious schism. (See *Zend Avesta*, Part I, Introduction, pp. lxxix to lxxxi).

glance how slight a difference there is between the two languages :—

## Zend.

(1) *Vispa drukhsh janante*  
All (every) evil spirit is slain.

*Vispa drukhsh nashyate*  
All (every) evil spirit goes away.

*Yatha hanoti uisham vacham*  
When he hears these words.  
(Yasna XXXI, verse 8, quoted in Haug's *Essays*, p. 196).

## Vedic Sanskrit.

*Vishva duraksho jinvali.*

विश्व दुरक्षो जिन्वति

*Vishva duraksho nashyati.*

विश्व दुरक्षो नश्यति

*Yadu shrinoti etam vacham.*

यदा शृणोति एतां वाचम्

(2) *Tad thva perza erah* | *Tat tva prishtha ritam*  
That thee I will ask right | तत् त्वा पृष्टा ऋतम्

*mai vacha Ahura me* | *me vacha asura*  
me tell O Ahura ! मे वच असुर

*Kasnu zatha pita* | *Konah junita pita*  
What creator father को नः जनिता पिता

*ashahya paureyo Ritasya prourmyah*  
of righteousness first ऋतस्य पौर्यः

*Kasnu queng starancha* | *Konah Kon (or srach?) taranshcha*  
Who the sun and stars को नः क(स्वः?) तारांश्च

*dad adhvnam* | *dad adhvnam*  
made path ? दाद् अध्वानम्

*Ke ya mao ukshyati* | *Ko yo masam ukshyati*  
Who that the moon increases को यो मासे उक्ष्यति

*nerofasti thoud* | *nirapasyati tva*  
waned besides thee निरपस्यति त्वत्

*Tachid Mazda vashmi* | *Tadrile Medha vashmi*  
Such things Mazda I wish तादृक् मेधा वश्मि

*anyacha viduye* | *anyachcha vittuve*  
and others to know अन्यच्च वित्तवे

(Ushtavanti Gatha Yas.  
XLIV, 3, quoted by Dr Haug  
in his *Essays*, p. 144.)

## § 2—SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE VEDAS AND THE ZEND AVESTA IN VERSIFICATION.

It is not a little remarkable that the Zend Avesta bears a close similarity to the Vedas also in versification. Dr. Haug remarks : — “As to the metres used in the Gathas, we find them of the same nature as those which are to be found in the Vedic Hymns.”\*

Rev. Mills observes : “The Vedic hymns sung in metres closely similar to those in both the Gathas and the later Avesta.”†

Of the *Gatha Spentamainyu*, for instance, he says : “Its metre may be said to be *tristup*, as its lines have each eleven syllables and are arranged in stanzas of four.”‡

Of *Ushtavaiti Gatha*, Yasna xliv, 3, which has been quoted above (in § 1) and translated into Vedic Sanskrit, Dr. Haug says : — “This metre (consisting of five *padas* of eleven syllables each) is very near to the Vedic *trishtubh*, which consists of four *padas*, each comprising eleven syllables which make forty-four in all. The *Ushtavaiti Gatha* only exceeds it by one *pada* of eleven syllables. In the third Gatha called the *Spentomainyu*, however, the *trishtubh* is completely represented, as each verse there comprises four *padas*, each of eleven syllables, in all forty-four, just as many as the *trishtubh* is composed of.”§

About Yasna XXXI, verse 8, also quoted and translated into Sanskrit above (in § 1), Dr. Haug remarks : — “It stands nearest to the *gayatri* metre,

\* Haug's *Essays*, p. 143.

Zend Avesta, Part III, Preface, p. xxxvi.

† *Ibid*, p. 145.

§ Haug's *Essays*, p. 145.

which consists of 24 syllables divided into three *padas*, each comprising eight syllables.”\*

Of Fargard XIX, Dr. Haug says :—“The song is composed in the heroic metre of the ancient Aryans (the *anushtubh*) which has given rise to the common *shloka*.”†

Again : “The metre of *Homoyasht* is very near *anushtubh*.”‡

He further writes :

“Among the metres used in the Yajur Veda, we find several which are marked by the epithets *asuri* : such as *gayatri asuri*, *ushnih asuri*, *pankti asuri* : these *asura* metres.....are actually to be found in the Gatha literature of the Zend Avesta.....  
.....The *gayatri asuri* consists of fifteen syllables, which metre we discover in the Gatha Ahunavaiti, if we bear in mind that the number of sixteen syllables of which it generally consists is often reduced to fifteen (cf., for instance, Yasna XXXI, 6, and the first two lines of XXXI). The *ushnih asuri*, consisting of fourteen syllables, is completely extant in the Gatha Vohukhshathra (Yas II), each verse of which comprises fourteen syllables. The *pankti asuri* consists of eleven syllables, just as many as we found in the Gathas Ushtavaiti, and Spentamainyu”§ (Ibid, p. 271-72).

### § 3.—“ARYAS” THE COMMON NAME OF FOLLOWERS, OF BOTH RELIGIONS.

The reader need hardly be told that the forefathers of those who are now styled Hindus were called

\* Ibid, p. 144.

† Haug's *Essays*, p. 252.

‡ Ibid.

§ Haug's *Essays*, p. 271-72.

Aryas" in ancient times. But it is not equally well-known that the ancient Parsis also called themselves Aryas.

The term *Arya* occurs in many parts of the Zend Avesta. We shall quote a few verses :—

"To the glory of the Aryas." (Sirozah I, 9)†

"To the glory of the Aryas made by Mazda." (Ibid I, 25).‡

"We sacrifice unto the glory of the Aryas made by Mazda." (Sirozah II, 9)§

"The swift archer, the Arya amongst the Aryas." (VIII, Yast 6).||

"How shall the countries of the Aryas grow fertile." (Ibid, 9)¶

"Let the Aryan nation bring libation unto him." (Ibid, 58.)\*\*

"For his brightness and glory I will offer unto him a sacrifice worth being heard, viz., unto Mithra, the lord of wide pastures. We offer libations unto Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, who gives a happy dwelling and good dwelling to the Aryan nation." (X, Yast. 4)††

"Ahura Mazda said: "If men sacrifice unto Vretregbna made by Ahura.....never will a hostile horde enter the Aryan countries, nor any

\* According to the Vedas all mankind is divided into Aryas and non-Aryas. E.g., see Rig Veda I, 10, 51 & 8.

विजानीह्यार्यान् ये च दस्यवो

† *Zend Avesta*, Vol. II, p. 7.

‡ Ibid, p. 11.

§ Ibid, p. 15.

|| Ibid, p. 95.

¶ *Zend Avesta*, Part II, p. 96.

\*\* Ibid, p. 108.

†† Ibid, p. 120.

plague, nor leprosy, nor venomous plants, nor the chariot of a foe, nor the uplifted spear of a foe." (Bhramyast. 48) \*

"The whole of the xviii Astad yasht is devoted to the glory of the Aryas."—We quote the opening verse:—

"Ahura Mazda spoke unto Spitama Zaradushtra, saying:—

'I made the Aryan glory rich in food, rich in flocks, rich in wealth, rich in glory, provided with full store of intelligence, with full store of money to withstand need and to withstand enemies.'†

#### § 4.—THE FOUR-FOLD CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIETY.

All scholars are now agreed in holding that the system of hereditary castes which forms the ugliest feature of the present Hindu society, and which is mainly responsible for the degradation of the Hindus, as a body, did not exist in the Vedic times and is not sanctioned by the Vedas. The Vedic classification of human society into Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras (of which the present caste system is a corruption) was something totally different. For a full treatment of the subject the reader is referred to the writer's pamphlet on "Caste system."‡ Briefly speaking the older Vedic classification differed from the present caste system in two important respects:—

(1) It classified all men into four groups only, viz., the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and

\* Ibid, p. 244.

† Ibid, p. 283.

‡ Caste system: Its evils and remedies, published under the auspices of the Arya Tract Society by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, U. P.



the Sudras. The classification went no further and the Vedas or other books of the Vedic literature do not give the least countenance to the endless subdivision which is now found in each principal caste, splitting up the society into numberless petty units and rendering all free intercourse impossible.

(2) It was based not on the accident of birth, but on the just and equitable principle of merits. In other words, if a man possessed the qualifications of a Brahman, i.e., if he was possessed of learning, bore a righteous and pious character, and took upon himself the avocation of a priest, teacher, or religious guide, he was classed as a *Brahman* even if he came of Sudra parents. If he chose a military career, he became a *Kshatriya*, no matter what his parentage was. If he took to trade and commerce, or took up agriculture, or studied and pursued any of the arts or other industrial occupations (which were not then looked upon as unworthy of the twice-born classes), he was designated a *Vaishya*. If he was not possessed of the qualifications necessary for any of these three classes, and was only fit to servo them, he was termed a *Sudra*. The Vedic system of Varnas was thus entirely free from all the worst features which characterise the present caste system and which have made it (as Sir H. Maine has truly called it) "the most disastrous and blighting of human institutions." It did not condemn a man to a life of drudgery simply because he happened to be born in a Sudra family, nor elevate a man to an honoured and exalted position in society merely because he came of Brahman parents. On the other hand, it was only a classification of human society on the principle of merits or personal qualifications, and was based on the doctrine of

division of labour and co-operation to which all civilization owes its progress, and even its origin. The Vedic verse which the orthodox Hindus suppose to sanction the caste system really describes by analogy to a human body, the functions which each of the four classes has to perform in body politic. We quote it below :—

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कुतः ।

ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ॥

“The Brahmans are his (*i.e.*, of mankind personified) head; the Kshatriyas are his arms; the Vaishyas are his thighs; and the Sudras are his feet.”\*

The same four-fold classification of human society is to be found in the Zend Avesta. Dr. Haug remarks : “In the religious records of the Iranians, who are so nearly allied [to the Indians], in the Zend Avesta, the four castes are quite plainly to be found, only under other names—(1) *Athrara* “priest (Sanskrit *Atharvan*), (2) *Rathacstao* “warrior,” (3) *Vastriyofshyas* “cultivator,” (4) *Huites* (Pehl. *Hutokhs*) “workman (*Yasna* 19, 17, *Werterj*).†

Prof. Darmesteter remarks in his translation of Zend Avesta : “We find in it (the *Dinkirt*) a description of the four classes which strikingly reminds one of the Brahmanical account of the origin of castes (*Chap.* XIII), and which were certainly borrowed from India.”‡

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\* The orthodox translation that the Brahmans sprang from the mouth of God, the Kshatriyas from his arms, etc., is incorrect, and is not borne out by the context. For a full discussion on the subject and an exposition of this mantra, see the writer's Vedic Text No. I “Constitution of Human Society,” published by the Arya Tract Society, Agra. Price 3-1-0.

| Quoted from Haug in *Muir's Sanskrit Texts*, Part II, p. 461.

| *Zend Avesta*, Part I, Introduction, p. XXXIII.

"We may also quote a verse from the Catechical Zend :

"(Question)—With what classes of men?"

"(Answer)—The priest, the charioteer (as the chief of warriors), the systematic tiller of the ground, and the artisan.....These are the classes and states in life, which give attention to the rulers, and fulfil the (laws of) religion, through whose actions the settlements are furthered in righteousness."\*

The four classes are mentioned also in the later scriptures of the Parsi religion, though the names have again changed. For example, in *Nama Mihabād* we read :—

"O ! Abad ! The will of God is not otherwise than the religion of the Abadis. Whoever out of the following four classes will tread this path, will attain to heaven : Horistaran, Nuristaran, Soristaran, Rozistaran.† Sasan V, the last of the inspired writers of the Parsis, thus comments on the above :—

"*Horistaran* ‡ are called in Pahalvi *Rathornan*. They are priests intended for protecting, strengthening and ascertaining religion, and also for helping in general administration."

"*Nuristaran* are called in Pahalvi *Ratheshtaram*.§ They are kings and warriors, and are fit to be heads, chiefs, rulers, and administrators of the country.

"*Soristaran* are called in Pahalvi *Bastaryoshan*. They render all kinds of service."

\* *Zend Avesta*, Part III, Catish. Zend 16.

† *Nama Mihabād*, 145.

‡ *Zend Athravan* = Sanskrit, *Atharvan*, vide Dr. Haug's remarks quoted above.

§ *Zend Ratheshtan* = Sanskrit *Rathasthas*, meaning literally charioteers or warriors.

"*Rozistaran* are called in Pahlvi *Hotkhshan*. They follow the various kinds of occupations and agriculture. And thou wilt not find any group of men out of or beyond these classes (*i. e.*, these four classes comprehend all mankind)."

Who that is familiar with the Aryan system of four Varnas can doubt the Vedic origin of the above classification as given in the Parsi books?

It is interesting to note in this connection that like the twice-born (the first three classes) among the followers of Vedic religion, the Parsis are also enjoined to wear the sacred thread, which they call *kusti*. We quote from the Vendidad:—

"Zaradushtra asked Ahura Mazda: O! Ahur Mazda! through what is one a criminal worthy of death?" Then said Ahura Mazda: "By teaching an evil religion!" Spitama Zaradushtra! Whoever during three spring seasons does not put on the sacred thread (*kusti*), does not recite the Gathas, does not reverence the good waters, etc."

### § 5.—CONCEPTION OF GOD.

Before proceeding to show the similarity between the Vedic and Zoroastrian teachings about God, we consider it necessary to remove certain misconceptions which still prevail regarding the Vedic notion of the Deity.

The Vedas are not unoften charged with teaching polytheism, element worship, nature worship, and what not. The charge is, however, totally unjust. The mistake arises from confounding the two different senses in which such words as *sūrya*, *agni*, *indra*, *mitra* and *varuna* are used in the Vedas. It is an old and

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\* Vendidad, Fargard XVIII.

recognized canon of Vedic interpretation, the importance of which cannot be too much emphasized,\* that all Vedic words are to be interpreted in their *yougiṇa* or derivative sense. As such, many words used in the Vedas bear two, and sometimes even more than two, significations. For instance, the word "*indra*," which is derived from the root *idi*, 'to be glorious' (*इदि ऐवर्द्ये*) is used in at least three senses. It sometimes means the sun, which is possessed of glorious light; at other times it means the king who possesses earthly glory; at other times, again, it means God, whose glory is transcendental. The first chapter of Swami Dayananda's *Sattyartha Prakasha* (or 'the Light of Truth') contains a learned exposition of the subject. Therein the author has given the derivative meanings of a number of such terms, showing unanswerably that, when used in connection with worship, all these words signify the one Almighty God. We give below a few of these expressions with their several meanings:—

1. *Indra*—(from *idi*, 'to possess glory')  
—(1) the sun; (2) the king; (3) God, the glorious.
2. *Mitra*—(from *mid*, 'to be friendly')  
—(1) the sun; (2) friend; (3) God, the friendly.
3. *Varuna*—(from *tri*, 'to choose'; 'to cover')  
—(1) the sky; (2) God, the greatest and the best.

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\* For a full exposition of the subject, we refer the reader to Pundit Gura Datta's *Terminology of the Vedas and European Scholars*.

4. *Agni*—(from *anchu*, 'to move'; 'to be present'; 'to know'; to worship')

== (1) fire or heat, which moves fast;  
(2) God, the omnipresent and the  
adorable.

5. *Vayu*—(from *va*, 'to blow,' etc.)

== (1) wind; (2) God, the strong.

6. *Chandra*—(from *chidi*, 'to please')

== (1) the pleasing moon; (2) God the  
giver of all happiness.

7. *Yama*—(from *yam*, 'to restrain,' 'regulate,'  
'rule' or 'control')

== (1) a king; (2) God, the ruler of all.

8. *Kala*—(from *kal*, 'to count')

== (1) time; (2) God the counter of all.

9. *Yajna*—(from *yaj*, 'to worship'; 'to make offerings')

== (1) the act of worshipping or making offerings; (2) God, the adorable.

10. *Rudra*—(from *rudir*, 'to weep')

== (1) a king who chastises the wicked;  
(2) God the chastiser of the wicked.

There are other words which are generally used for God in the Vedas, but which European scholars, with their minds biased by Puranic mythology and the superstition and idolatry of modern Hinduism, sometimes interpret as names of different deities. Such are, for example, the well-known words: *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva* which, in the Puranas, stand for the three chief deities of Hindu pantheon. The intelligent reader need hardly be told that these notions

are quite foreign to the Vedas. Swami Dayananda Sarasvati derives and interprets them thus :—

*Brahma*—(from *br̥hi*, 'to be great')

=the Great Being.

*Vishnu*—(from *vish*, 'to enter'; 'to pervade')

=God, who pervades all things.

*Shiva*—(from *shiv*, 'to do good')

=God, who is the source of all good.

*Shankara*—also means literally, 'he who does good.'

*Mahadeva*—means literally, 'the great *deva*.'

*Ganesha*—means literally, 'the lord of all collected things.'

That all these terms signify one God is confirmed by the internal evidence of the Vedas. We quote from Rig Veda :—

इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥

ऋग्वेद मं० १ सू० १९४ मंत्र ४९

"That Supreme Spirit is the protector of all, and pervades and gives light to all bright things. He is called *Indra*, or the glorious; *Mitra*, or the friendly; *Varuna*, or the greatest and the best; *Agni*, or the adorable. Though one, He is called by the learned by many names, such as *Agni* (the adorable); *Yama* (the ruler); *Matarishva* (the mighty)."

In another part of the same Veda we find :—

सुपर्णं विप्रा कवयो वचोभिरेकं सन्तं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति ।

ऋग मं० १० सू० ११४ मंत्र ५

"The learned and wise describe the one existing God in many forms of expressions."†

\* Rig Veda, mandala i, sukta 104, verse 40.

† Rig Veda, x, 114, 5.

Again in the Yajur Veda we read :—

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तदु वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमाः ।

तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म ता आपः स प्रजापतिः ॥

यजु० अ० ३२ मं० १.

“He is *Agni* (adorable); He is *Aditya* (impérishable); He is *Vayu* (omnipresent); He is *Chandrama* (the giver of happiness); He is *Shukra* (the creator); He is, *Brahma* (the great); He is *Apah* (all-pervading); He is *Prajapati* (the lord of all creatures).”\*

The above view is also corroborated by external evidence.

In Kaivalya Upanishad we find :—

स ब्रह्मा स विष्णुः स रुद्रः स शिवः सोऽक्षरः स

परमः स्वराट् । स इन्द्रः स कालाग्निः स चन्द्रमाः ॥

कैवल्योपनिषद्

“He is *Brahma* (the great); He is *Vishnu* (the pervader); He is *Rudra* (the chastiser); He is *Shiva* (the source of all good and happiness); He is *Akshara* (the never-perishing); He is the most high and self-effulgent; He is *Indra* (the glorious); He is *Kalagni* (the adorable and counter of all); He is *Chandrama* (the giver of happiness.)”†

Again in Manu we read :—

प्रशासितारं सर्वेषामणीयांसमणोरपि ।

रुक्माभं स्वप्नधीगम्यं विद्यात्तं पुरुषं परम् ॥

पतमग्निं च दत्त्येके मनुमन्ये प्रजापतिम् ।

इन्द्रमेकेऽपरे प्राणमपरे ब्रह्मशाश्वतम् ॥

मनु १२ । १२२-२३

\* Yajur Veda, xxxii, 1.

† Kaivalya Upanishad.



"One ought to know that Supreme Spirit Who is Ruler of all, subtler than the subtlest, of resplendent glory, and capable of being realised only by meditation. Some call him *Agni* (i. e., 'adorable'); others call him *Mannu* (i. e., 'thinker'); and others *Prajapati* ('lord of creatures'). Some again call him *Indra* (i. e., 'the glorious'); others *Prana* (i. e., 'source of life'); and others, the eternal *Brahma* (i. e., 'the great')."

The mistranslation of the Sanskrit word *deva* or the cognate word *devata*, has been the most fruitful source of misconception on the subject under consideration. Till Swami Dayananda Saraswati revolutionized the public opinion by his masterly exposition of the true signification of the word *deva*, † it was a fashion among European Sanskritists to invariably translate it by "god." And as many things are designated *deva* or *devata* in the Vedas, it was easily taken for granted that the Vedas taught a belief in many "gods." In the entire range of Sanskrit literature the misinterpretation of no other single word has caused a greater misunderstanding of a great and ancient religion on a most material point.

The word *deva* is derived from the root *dir* 'to shine,' ‡ and therefore literally means a "shining" or bright thing, and hence in a secondary sense a thing possessed of bright qualities. As such, it is

\* Mannu, xii, 122-3.

† See Rig Vedañi Bhashya Bhumiika, pp. 50-74.

‡ 'To shine' is the most ordinary meaning of the root *dir*. It is, however, used in ten different senses. Says Pañini, the celebrated grammarian, 'दि॒वु क्रीडाविजिगीषाव्यवहारव्युत्तिस्तुतिर्नोदमंदस्वप्न-  
कान्तिगतिषु' "Div is used in the senses of sporting, desire to conquer, pursuit, brilliancy, praise, pleasure, exhilaration, sleep, knowledge, motion and acquisition."

an epithet applied to the sun, the moon, and other forces of nature ; e. g., fire, wind, etc. For instance, we read in the Yajur Veda :—

अग्निर्देवता वातो देवता सूर्यो देवता चन्द्रमा देवता विश्वे देवता  
रुद्रा देवतादित्या देवता मरुतो देवता विश्वेदेवा देवता बृहस्पति-  
र्देवतेन्द्रो देवता वरुणो देवता ॥ यजुः १४ । २०

Swami Dayananda Saraswati's writings have changed the whole current of thought on this point. In one of his latest writings, "India : what can it teach us?" in which the influence of Swami Dayananda's view is clearly discernible, Prof. Max Müller admits : "The dictionaries tell you that *deva* means God or gods, and so no doubt it does. But if we always translated *deva* in the Vedic hymns by God, we should not be translating but completely transforming the thoughts of the Vedic poets.....*Deva* originally meant *bright* and nothing else. Meaning bright, it was constantly used of the sky, the stars, the sun, the dawn, the day, the spring, the rivers, the earth ; and when a poet wished to speak of all these by one and the same word—by what we should call a general term—he called them all *devas*." Again he says :—"We must never forget that what we call gods in ancient mythology are not substantial, living individual beings of whom we can predicate this or that. *Deva* which we translated by God is nothing but an adjective, expressive of a quality shared by heaven and earth, by the sun and the stars, and the dawn and the sea, viz., brightness."†

The ancient Rishis cannot, therefore, be called polytheists or nature-worshippers, simply because they applied the term *deva* to the above-named objects of

\* India : What can it teach us? Prof. Max Müller, p. 218.

† Ibid, p. 159-160.

nature, any more than a man who says that the sun or the moon is "bright," or who speaks of a bright sky, or a brilliant victory, and so on.

Yāska, the greatest and most ancient authority on the Vedas, and the celebrated author of the Vedic lexicon (Nighantu), and Vedic Philology (Nirukta), interprets the word *deva* in a still wider sense. He derives the word thus :—

देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद्वा द्योतनाद्वा द्युस्थानो वा भवति ॥

निरुक्त ७ । १५ ।

"That which confers some advantage upon us, can illuminate things, i. e., explain or throw light on them, and that which is the source (lit., place) of light, is *deva*."\*

The word *deva* is, therefore, used for many other things. We shall give some of its most important meanings :—

(1) It is used for parents and teachers inasmuch as they confer innumerable advantages upon us. In Tattiriya Upanishad, † the mother, father and teacher are called *devas* :—

मातृदेवो भव पितृदेवो भव आचार्यदेवो भव ।

तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद् अनु० ११

(2) It is also used for learned men, who have their minds illuminated, and who explain things to us. In Shatapatha Brahmana we read :—विद्वाश्च सो हि देवाः "the learned are the *devas*."

(3) It is also used for the senses which convey to us a knowledge of material world. For example, in Yajur Veda we read :—

अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद् देवा आप्नुवन् पूर्वमर्षत् ।

यजुः अ० ४० मं० ४

\* Nirukta, vii, 15.

† Tattiriya Upanishad, xi.

“God is one, He does not move, and yet is swifter than the mind ; the senses (*devas*) cannot reach Him, though He is already in them.”\*

Again, in Mundaka Upanishad we read :—

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा । ज्ञान-  
प्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥

मुण्डक २।८

“God cannot be attained or apprehended by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the other senses (*dēvas*), nor by austerity or works. The contemplator with a mind purified sees Him by the calm light of Knowledge.”†

(±) Many of our readers must be aware that each *mantra* or verse of the Vedas has its *devata*. The European Sanskritists understand by it the god invoked in that verse. And as different *mantras* have different *devatas*, it is, of course, supposed that the Vedic *rishis* invoked and worshipped many gods. This, however, is a great mistake. Yaska says :—

अथातो दैवतं तद्यानि नामानि प्राधान्यस्तुतीनां देवतानां  
तदैवतमित्याचक्षते । सैषा देवतोपपरीक्षा यत्काम ऋषिर्यस्यां  
देवतायामर्थपत्यमिच्छन् स्तुतिं प्रयुंक्ते तदैवतः स मंत्रो भवति ॥  
निरुक्त ७।१†

The purport of the above is that the *devata* of a *mantra* means thing which forms the subject of exposition in the *mantra*. In his “India, and what can it teach us?” from which we have already quoted, Prof. Max Müller admits this. Says he :—

“If we call them (the things described in the Vedic verses, gods or goddesses, we must remember the remark of an ancient native theologian, (meaning

\* Yajur Veda xl, 4.

† Mundaka Upanishad, ii, 8.

‡ Nirukta, vii, 1.

Yaska evidently) that by *devata* or *deity* he means no more than the object celebrated in a hymn. ”?

(5). The word *deva* is also used for God, who is the *illuminator* of all things, the source of all light and knowledge, and the giver of all that we enjoy in this world. But it does not *always* mean God. Indeed, as Prof. Max Müller admits, the word is not a substantive but an adjective, and as such is applicable to whatever possesses the attributes which the word connotes (*viz.*, brightness, conferring advantages, illuminating or throwing light on a thing, etc.)

Now the reader will be able to see that if the ancient Aryas called the sun and the moon, the sky and the sea, the earth and heavens *devatas*, it is not to be inferred that they believed them or worshipped them as “gods.” All these and many other substances, as well as God, are denoted by the term *devata* but of these God alone is to be worshipped. The Yajur Veda clearly says :—

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् । तमेव विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यनेज्यनाय ॥ यजु० ३१ । १८

“May I know that Supreme Spirit, who is all light and beyond darkness! By knowing Him alone can one overcome the great death; there is no other path for salvation.”†

In Shatapatha Brahmana we are told in clear and forcible terms :—

योऽन्यां देवतामुपासते न स वेद यथा पशुरेव स देवानाम् ।

शतपथ कां० १४ अ० ४

“Who worships any other *devata*, he knows not. He is like unto a brute among the learned.”‡

\* India : what can it teach us ? p. 147.

† Yajur Veda, xxxi, 18.

‡ Shatapatha, xii, 4.

We shall quote a hymn from the Rig Veda which will show what a clear and consistent, pure and perfect, monotheism is taught in the Vedas :—

- हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्त्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत्।  
 स दाधार पृथिवीं द्यामुत्तेमां कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥१॥  
 य आत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्व उपासते प्रशिषं यस्य देवाः ।  
 यस्यच्छायामृतं यस्य मृत्युः कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥२॥  
 यः प्राणतो निमिपतो महित्वैकइद्राजाजगतो बभूव ।  
 य ईशे अस्य द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥३॥  
 यस्येमे हिमवन्तो महित्वा यस्य समुद्रं रसया सहाहुः ।  
 यस्येमाः प्रदिशो यस्य बाहू कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥४॥  
 येन द्यौरुग्रा पृथिवी च दृढा येन स्वःस्तमिर्तं येन नाकः ।  
 योऽन्तरिक्षे रजसो विमानः कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥५॥  
 यं क्रन्दसी अवसातस्तभाने अभ्यैक्षेतां मनसारेजमाने ।  
 यत्राधिसूर उदितो विभाति कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥६॥  
 आपोह यद् बृहतीर्विश्वमायन् गर्भं दधानाः जनयन्तीरग्निम् ।  
 ततो देवानां समवर्त्ततासुरेकः कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥७॥  
 यश्चिदापो महिनापर्यपश्यद् दक्षं दधानाः जनयन्तीर्यज्ञम् ।  
 आ देवानामधिदेव एक आसीत् कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥८॥  
 मानो हिंसीजनिता यः पृथिव्या यो वा दिवं सत्यधर्माजजान ।  
 यदत्रापश्चन्द्रा बृहतीर्जजान कस्मैदेवाय हविषा विधेम ॥९॥  
 प्रजापते न त्वदेतान्यन्यो विश्वाजातानि परिता बभूव ।  
 यत्कामास्ते जुहुमस्तन्नो अस्तु वयं स्याम पतयोरयोणाम् ॥१०॥  
 ऋग्वेद मं० १० सू० १२ मं० १-१० ॥

“In the beginning there existed God, the source of light. He was the *one* lord of all created beings. He upholds this earth and the heavens. He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers.”

“He, Who is the giver of spiritual knowledge and giver of strength, Whom the world worships; Whose command all learned men obey; Whose-

shelter is immortality ; Whose shadow is death ; He it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers."

" He, Who by His greatness is the *one* sole king of this animate and inanimate world, Who is the creator and lord of all bipeds and quadrupeds ; He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers."

" Whose greatness these snowy mountains and the ocean with its waters proclaim ; Whose arms are these vast regions ; He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers."

" By Whom the heavenly bodies are uplifted and the earth is made stable ; by Whom the firmament and heaven are established ; Who pervades the entire space by His spiritual essence ; He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers."

" To Whom the earth and heavens look up, being upheld by His protection, and moved by His will ; in Whom the sun rises and shines forth : He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers."

" When this vast diffused matter producing an igneous condition, and holding in its womb this universe, manifested itself, then, He was the *one* life of all shining beings ; He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers."

" He, Who with His greatness looked on that diffused<sup>\*</sup> matter possessed of heat and energy and

\* The reference in this verse and the previous one, is to the nebulous state of the universe. We shall refer to the subject later on. (See § 7 on "Cosmogony" in this chapter). आप is derived from the root आपृत् 'to pervade' 'to be diffused'; we have, therefore, taken it to mean 'diffused matter.' That this, and not 'water' is meant here, will be clear from the adjectival clauses दत्तं दधानाः 'possessed of heat or energy' जनयन्तीर्यज्ञम् 'producing cosmos' in this mantra, and गर्भं दधानाः 'holding the germ (or the universe) in its womb' and जनयन्तीरग्निम् 'producing fire or, igneous condition' in the foregoing verse. . . .

producing the cosmos; Who is the *one* supreme lord (*adhidēva*); of all bright things (*devas*); He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers.”

“May the lord of truth and righteousness, creator of the earth, who has also created the heavens, and who manifested the vast and shining diffused matter; may He not inflict pain upon us; He, it is to Whom we shall offer our prayers.”

“O lord of all creatures, no other than Thee can control and govern all these created things. May the things desiring which we pray to Thee, be ours! May we be lords of good things of the world.”\*

No less than 4 times in this hymn of ten verses has the word “one” एक been used. The reader will search in vain for a more clear and unambiguous, beautiful and spirited, description of the unity of God in the scriptures of any other religion.

When confronted with one or two isolated passages of the Vedas or Upanishads asserting the unity of Divine being, Western scholars are sometimes apt to exclaim that they teach monism rather than monotheism; that their sense† is that God is one, and there is no second *thing*,—and not that there is no second *God*; that in short the tenor of such passages is *pantheistic*, and not *monotheistic*. We regret we can not make a further digression from the main subject of this

\* Rig Veda x. 121, 1—10.

† For example, says Mr. J. Murdoch in his *Vedic Hinduism*, (Religious Reform Series, Part III):—

“Pantheism and polytheism are often combined, but monotheism, in the strict sense of the word, is not found in Hinduism..... The Chhandogya formula, *Ekamevadviṭīyam Brahma* (एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म one God without a second) was also adopted by Keshava Chandra Sen. But it does not mean that there is no second God, but that there is no second anything—a totally different doctrine.”



*Thraitana* (the *Peridun* of *Shahnama*),—are identical with *Aptya* and *Traitana*. Dr. Haug says :—“*Thraitana* (*Peridun*) is easily recognized in the Vedic *Traitana*.....His father is called *Athwya* which corresponds exactly with the frequent surname of *Trita* in the Vedas, viz., *Aptya*.”

The *third*, viz., *Thrita* is identical with Vedic *Trita*. Dr. Haug says :—

“*Thrita* one of the *Sama* family (from which the great hero *Rustam* sprang) is in the *Zend Avesta* the first physician, the curer of the diseases created by *Ahriman*, an idea which we find also attached to *Trita* in the Vedas. He is said in the *Atharva Veda* (VI, 113, 1) to extinguish illness in man.....He grants a long life (*Taittiriya Samhita*, i—8,102). Any evil thing is to be sent to him to be appeased (*Rv.* VII, 47, 13). This circumstance is hinted at in the *Zend Avesta* by the surname *Sama* which means appeaser.”†

It is not a little remarkable that the names of all the predecessors of *Zarathushtra* (except his own father) should be traceable to the Vedic literature. The above enumeration is obviously a sort of reminiscences of Vedic allegories or traditions still retained by the Iranians in *Zarathushtra*'s time.

(iii) There is in the *Zend Avesta* a clear and unmistakeable reference to the *Atharva Veda*. We will reproduce it as it is quoted by Dr. Haug: “*Homa* deposed *Keresani* from his sovereignty whose lust of power had so increased that he said: no *Atharvas*' (fire priests') repetition of *Apam aioshtish* (“approach of the waters”) shall be tolerated in my empire to make it prosper; (and) he would annihilate all that

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\* Haug's *Essays*, p. 278.

† Haug's *Essays*, p. 278.



(iv) It can be proved that the ancient Parsis were a colony from India.

Professor Max Müller says in clear terms :—

“It can now be proved even by geographical evidence that the Zoroastrians had been settled in India before they emigrated into Persia.....That the Zoroastrians and their ancestors started from India during the Vedic period can be proved as distinctly as that the inhabitants of Messilia started from Greece.”\*

Still more unambiguous are the words used by the learned Professor in his lectures on the Science of Language.

“The Zoroastrians were a colony from Northern India. They had been together for a time with the people whose sacred songs have been preserved to us in the Veda. A schism took place and the Zoroastrians migrated westward to Arachasia and Persia..... They gave to the new cities and to the rivers along which they settled the names of cities and rivers familiar to them, and reminding them of the localities which they had left. Now as a Persian *h* points to a Sanskrit *s*, *Harayu* would be in Sanskrit *Sarayu*. One of the sacred rivers of India (a river mentioned in the Veda...) has the name of Sarayu, the modern Sarju.”†

Besides ‘Harayu,’ and ‘Sarayu’ referred to by Professor Max Müller, many other names of Persian localities can be traced to Sanskrit names. For example :—

(a) *Euphrates*, the name of a famous river in Persia, or ‘*Farat*,’ as it is more generally called, is to be traced to the word ‘*Bharatu*,’ a very ancient name in Sanskrit not only of this country (India), but

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\* *Chips from a German Workshop*, Vol. I, p. 235.

† *Lectures on the Science of Language*, Vol. I, p. 235.

also of its inhabitants. We still use the word 'Bhárata,'\*, 'Bháratavarsha' or Bharatakhanda' for India. That it was originally the name of the people will be evident to those who have read the great Sanskrit Epic the *Mahabharata*. The very name "*Mahabharata*" signifies the 'history of (Maha) the great (Bharata) people, the sons of king Bharata. The people of India who called themselves 'Bharata,' emigrated and settled on the banks of the river to which they gave their name. That Sanskrit *bh* is changed in Persian *ph* or *f* is evident from (Vedic) Sanskrit verb *gribh* † 'to take or accept' which in Persian becomes *grift*.

(b) *Babylon*—The name of a celebrated city in Persia—once the capital of a great empire, situated on the banks of the Euphrates, can be traced to '*Blupalan*'—the people of 'Bhupala' who probably emigrated from India and founded this city.

(c) The people known as '*Cossai*,' living on the banks of the Tigris probably emigrated from Kashi or Benares—a city of great antiquity in India.

(d) The word *Iran* is certainly a corruption of *Aryan*, and was given to the country by the Aryan people who settled there.

In order to prove that a system of religion is derived from another: three things are to be proved, *viz.*, (1) the community of ideas and similarity of doctrines between them; (2) the priority of one to

\* '*Bhárata*' is the patronymic from *Bharata*, and means 'the sons of Bharata,' a celebrated king of ancient India who gave his name to his people and then to his country. He was the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala whose story is celebrated in Kalidasa's immortal comedy of '*Shakuntala*.'

† In modern Sanskrit the form of the verb is *grīh*, but in Vedic Sanskrit is invariably *Gribh*.

the other ; and (3) a channel or channels of communication between them. Now, the similarity of doctrines between the Vedic and Zoroastrian religions is too manifest to be questioned by any body. The priority of the Vedas to the Zend Avesta has also been clearly shown. The channel of communication is self-evident, when it is proved that the Iranians were a body of colonists from India, and emigrated from here in the Vedic period. It would also be easy to point out channels of subsequent communication. For instance, in *Namah Zaradushta*,<sup>\*</sup> we are told that Vyasa went to Persia and held a religious discussion with Zaradusht. God says to Zarathushta: "A very wise Brahmana named Vyasa whose like is scarcely to be found on the earth will come from India. He intends to put to you the question: Why is not God the immediate creator of all that exists?" (65, 66).

"Tell him that God created the First Intelligence without the assistance of any other; other material worlds (He created) through this Intelligence." (67).

"There can attach no blemish to His creatorship on account of the assistance or mediation of the First Intelligence." (68).

The second question will be: "Why is fire below the sky; the air below the fire; the water below the air; and the earth below water?" (71).

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\* This work, though certainly of considerably later date than the Zend Avesta, is ascribed to Zaradusht. The fact is that there have been several personages of this name, as there have been several *Rishis* bearing the names of Brahma, Vashishta, Narada, etc., and possibly of Vyasa too. As many as thirteen Zaradushtas are mentioned in *Dabistan*. The first of them, who is supposed to be the founder of Parsi religion, was called Spitama Zarathushta to distinguish him from others.

Then follows an answer to this question which God instructs Zaradusht to return to Vyasa (72—75). Sasan V in his commentary adds: "Vyasa met Gustaspa face-to-face in Balakh. The king invited all wise men; Zarathushtra also came out from his prayer room. And Vyasa embraced the religion of Zarathushtra."

This refers to the time of Gustaspa,\* the celebrated king of Bactria, who is said to have first promulgated Zoroastrianism as a State religion about 550 B. C., a most important time in the development of Zoroastrianism. From the highly eulogistic words in which Vyasa is spoken of, it is possible that the personage meant is no other than the well-known author of the *Vedānta Sūtras* and of the commentary on Patanjali's *Yoga Sūtras*. Sasan V wrote his commentary in comparatively recent times, and, therefore, his statement about the conversion of Vyasa to Zoroastrianism need not be taken seriously. While it is of no little significance that the Parsi books themselves supply evidence of a contact between two great teachers of the two religions at a most important and epoch-making time in the history of Zoroastrianism.

Coming down to still later times we find that Sasan I, from whose works we have quoted more than once, not only lived in India, but also wrote his works

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\* This is a later form of the real name of this king which was *Vistaspa* corresponding to Sanskrit *Viśvataspa*. In Greek books he is known as *Hystaspes*. According to a Parsi writer, Dr. S. A. Khapadia, M. D., L. R. C., P., Vistaspa or Gustaspa flourished nearly 3,500 years ago. (Vide his 'Teachings of Zoroaster and the Philosophy of the Parsi Religion, *Wisdom of the East Series*, p. 15 to 18.) This nearly tallies with the period assigned to the great Vyasa in Hindu chronology.

here. In clause 38 of his book God is made to say:—  
 “Blessed be thou, for I have accepted thy desire.”  
 Sasan V says in his commentary on this: “It should  
 be stated that after Alexander’s conquest of Persia,  
 Sasan, son of Darah, separated himself from his  
 uncle, went to India and engaged himself in piety  
 and contemplation of God. God was gracious to him  
 and accepted him as a prophet.”\*

Sasan V goes on to say, that Sasan I, ended his  
 days in India. Thus it was in India that one of the  
 last inspired writers of the Parsis, whose writings in  
 philosophical acumen and logical reasoning are not sur-  
 passed by the works of any other inspired Parsi writer  
 of the later age, was favoured with divine acceptance,  
 which Sasan V interprets to mean Divine Mission.

It is thus abundantly clear that Zoroastrianism  
 was not only originally derived from the Vedas  
 (when the ancestors of the Parsis emigrated from  
 India in the Vedic period), but that it has been in-  
 fluenced by the Vedic religion in its later develop-  
 ments also. This accounts for the fact that it is so  
 very similar to the Vedic religion even as presented  
 in its latest inspired writings or the *Dasatirs*.

We shall conclude this chapter by quoting the  
 opinion of a Parsi writer on the essential unity of the  
 Vedic and Zoroastrian religions:—

“Pure Vedism and pure Zoroastrianism are one.  
 Zoroastrianism sprang up as a reformatory revolution  
 against the corruptions and superstitions which had  
 obscured the primitive Vedic truths and which stood  
 in the place of the pure old religion to serve the pur-  
 poses of priest-craft and despotism. Zoroaster did in  
 the far off antiquity what the great and saintly Buddha

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\* Sasan I, p. 38.

did after him." (*Zoroastrianism and Theosophy* by Khursedji N. Seervai, Recording Secretary, T. S., Eastern Division).\*

Comments are hardly needed. The writer virtually admits that Zoroaster was like Buddha an Arya reformer, whose object was to purge the Vedic religion of its later corruptions. Another Parsi writer, Dr. S. A. Kapadia in his recent book,† expresses a similar opinion that the mission of Zoroaster was only to restore the purity of "the primitive Aryan Religion," or "the ancient monotheistic religion of the Aryas," (which, however, he does not distinctly say to be the Vedic Religion). Says he: "Things which were originally manifestations of God's works, became in course of time personified; assumed shapes of deities in the frail imagination of the devotees; and finally came to be adored in lieu of the Great Architect of the world. Thus a religious system in itself philosophically sublime, degenerated into a system of polytheism, having for its object, adoration of idols and visible forms of good and evil spirits, reflective of human imagination. This was the great evil which our prophet Zarathushtra laboured to remedy, and to restore the then ancient faith to its pristine purity of Ahura worship was his chief object."

It is probable that when Zoroaster flourished, the pure and monotheistic religion of the Vedas had degenerated into a belief in many gods or devas, with Indra as their king, and that the teaching of Zoroaster was a protest against this polytheistic tendency of the times. Naturally enough this protest must have

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\* *Zoroastrianism in the light of Theosophy*, p. 68.

† "The Teachings of Zoroastrianism and the Philosophy of the Parsi Religion," pp. 16-17.



caused some bitterness of feelings between those who clung to the current belief and the supporters of the reform movement. This would explain why *devas*\* or gods worshiped by the so-called Vedic Aryas came to be looked upon as 'evil spirits' in the Zend Avesta, *Indra*\* being regarded as their chief; while the word *Asura*\* (Z. Ahura) which the Zoroastrians used as the principal name of their Deity, underwent a similar change in Sanskrit, and came to be used invariably in the sense of an 'evil being.'

History, both ancient and modern, furnishes us with many illustrations of the truth that whenever through the selfishness and ascendancy of the priestly class, the religious apathy and ignorance of the masses, or other causes, a religion has degenerated, there has risen some high-souled man who being fired with a love and enthusiasm for truth and justice, undertakes the difficult task of reformation. What Zoroaster had to do in the far off antiquity and Gautama Buddha in later times, Raja Ram Mohan Rai, and last though not least, Swami Dayananda Saraswati did in our own times. Each of these great men, according to his own lights, strove to reform the old religion of the Vedas,—the primitive hoary religion of humanity, and to rescue it from the degradation into which ignorance and selfishness had plunged it. Through causes on which we need not dilate here, Zoroastrianism like Buddhism, assumed the form of a new religion. But we think it has been shown clearly enough that the principal truths taught by Zoroaster like those taught by Buddha were based on and derived from the Vedas.

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\* *Vide* foot-notes on the words *Asura*, *Dera*, *Indra* in § 1 of this Chapter. As we have explained there, *Deras* in the Zend Avesta mean "evil spirits," and *Indra* their king.

## CONCLUSION.

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We have seen that the principles of Mahommedanism and Christianity are derived from Judaism, those of Christianity being partly traceable also to Buddhism, that the doctrines of Judaism can be deduced from Zoroastrianism, and further that both Zoroastrianism and Buddhism are directly traceable to the Vedic religion. Can we similarly trace the teachings of the Vedas to any other Religion? No; for history does not know of any older or prior religion. Professor Max Müller, who made a lifelong study of the Vedas and than whom there has perhaps been no greater scholar of the science of comparative religion, says :—

"The Vedic religion was the only one, the development of which took place without any extraneous influences.....Even in the religion of the Hebrews, Babylonian, Phœnician and at a later time Persian influences have been discovered."\*

There are then obviously only two ways of accounting for the origin of Vedic religion :—either to regard the Vedic Rishis as *inspired* men, or to believe that they themselves by their unaided reason worked out the system of religious thought contained in the Vedas.

Even writers who do not believe in the Vedic revelation admit that the idea of God which is the

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\* *India, what can it teach us ?*, p. 120.

keystone in the arch of religion, could not be originated by man. Dr. Flint in his "Theism,"\* says:—

"The God of all those among us, who believe in God, even of those who reject Christianity, who reject all revelation, is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From these ancient Jewish fathers the knowledge of Him has historically descended through an unbroken succession of generations to us. We have inherited it from them. If it had not thus come down to us, if we had not been born into a society pervaded by it, there is no reason to suppose that we should have found it out for ourselves." Then speaking of the views expressed by the Koran, "Every child is born into the religion of nature; its parents make it a Jew, a Christian or a Magian."—Dr. Flint says:—"The view is, however, not a true one. A child is born not into the religion of nature, but into blank ignorance, and left entirely to itself, it would probably never find as much religious truth as the most ignorant of parents can teach it."†

Most of our readers who have followed us through the last two chapters will probably agree with us that the idea of God, as taught in the Bible, is derived from the Vedas, through the Zend Avesta, and that long before Abraham, Moses, Isaac, and Jacob were born, the Vedic Rishis had prayed to, and preached about one Eternal and Omnipresent God. We are therefore, justified in repeating the words of Dr. Flint with necessary alteration, and saying:—"The God of all those among us, who believe in God, even of those who reject the *Vedas*, who reject all revelation,

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\* "Theism" being the "Baird" Lectures for 1876 by Robert Flint, D. D., LL. D., F. R. S. E., (8th Edition), p. 19.

† *Theism*, p. 20.

is the God of *Agni, Vayu, Aditya* and *Āngirah*. From these primitive *Vedic Rishis* the knowledge of him has historically descended through an unbroken succession of generations to us. We have inherited it from them. If it had not thus come down to us, if we had not been born into a society pervaded by it, there is no reason to suppose that we should have found it out for ourselves."

The tendency of some modern thinkers is to explain the existence and growth of all institutions and ideas,—the idea of God not excepted,—by *Evolution*,\* *i. e.*, by gradual and continuous progress from crude beginnings. Now, while speaking of the three Semitic religions,—Judaism, Christianity, and Mahommedanism, (which alone he regards as *Theistic*),—Prof. Flint remarks about Mahommedanism:—

"Although the latest of the three to arise, Mahommedanism is manifestly the least developed, the least mature. Instead of evolving and extending the theistic idea which it borrowed, it has marred and mutilated it."†

Though himself an uncompromising *evolutionist*, Grant Allen makes a similar remark about Christianity having borrowed the idea of God from Judaism and having marred it. "Christianity," says he: "borrowed from Judaism this magnificent concept, and, humanly speaking, proceeded to spoil it by its addition of the Son and the Holy Ghost, who mar the complete unity of the grand Hebrew ideal."‡

\* *E.g.*, see Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God* (Rationalistic Press Association Series).

† *Theism*, p. 44.

‡ *Evolution of the Idea of God*, p. 14.

In Chapter V § 11, and Chapter VI § 5, we have shown that the idea of God has similarly deteriorated, rather than improved, in passing from the Vedas into the Zend Avesta, and thence into the Old Testament. How will the Evolutionist explain these facts which are so diametrically opposed to his theory of evolution?\*

As already observed the choice lies between (1) regarding the Vedic *Rishis* as inspired writers, and (2) ascribing to their unaided reason, a system of religion and philosophy at once pure and perfect, simple and grand, true and consistent,—from which the founders and teachers of all other religions have drawn their inspiration, and which has, thus, in one form or other, brought light and peace to all mankind, guiding them in darkness, strengthening them

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\* We ourselves are not opposed to the theory of evolution in respect of the idea of God in this sense that by lapse of time and with the ever-increasing stock of our knowledge we get better apprehensions of divine attributes. To quote from Dr. Flint's Theism:—"Thousands of years ago, there were men who said as plainly as could be done or desired that God was *Omnipotent*; but surely every one who believes in God will acknowledge that the discoveries of modern astronomy give more, overwhelming impression of divine power, than either heathen sage, or Hebrew psalmist can be imagined as possessing. It is ages since men ascribed perfect wisdom to God; but all discoveries of science which help us to understand how the earth is related to other worlds,—how it has been brought into its present condition, how it has been stocked, adorned and enriched with its varied tribes of plants and animals,—and how these have been developed, distributed and provided for,—must be accepted by every intolligont thoist, as enlarging and correcting human views as to God's ways of working, and consequently as to His wisdom," (p. 54-55). Dr. Flint, however, admits: "I donot believe, indeed, that we shall find out any absolutely new truth about God." (p. 58).

Evolution presupposes existing gorms. These germs are what we find in the Vedas.

in danger, and consoling them in affliction. And we should not forget that these *Rishis*, as is generally acknowledged, lived in the most ancient and primitive times when the human race was yet in its childhood. We leave the reader to choose whichever alternative he thinks more reasonable. But on whichever side his choice may be, we hope, enough has been said to prove that the Vedas are the ultimate source to which all religious knowledge can be traced. To our mind the second alternative seems opposed to the whole course of the history of Religion. We can now repeat the words of H. P. Blavatsky already quoted: "There never was a religious founder, whether Aryan, Semitic, or Turanian, who had *invented* a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders are all *transmitters*, not original teachers." Who is then the *original teacher* of Religion? Who except God about whom the great Patanjali says: स पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात् "He is the teacher of even the most ancient Rishis, being not limited by time."\*

We have followed up the stream of Religion along the diverse main channels in which it flows or has flowed in successive ages. The *Koran* and the *Bible* lead us to the *Zend Avesta*, and the latter on to the Vedas. Thence we can proceed no further and find the stream merging itself into the perpetual snows which descend from heavens.

Are we then not justified in saying that *the Vedas are THE FOUNTAIN-HEAD OF RELIGION* ?

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\* Yoga Sutra I, (i), 26.